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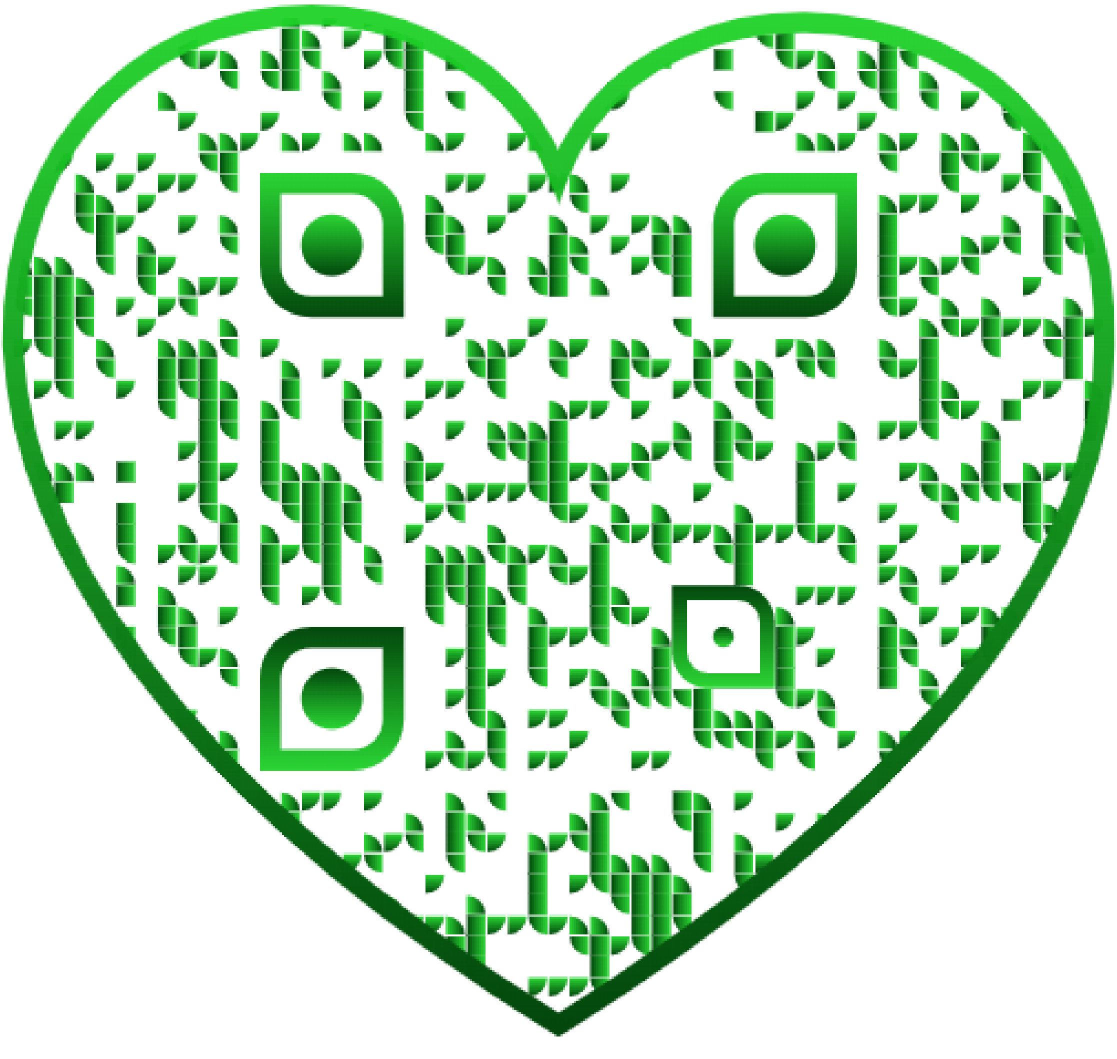

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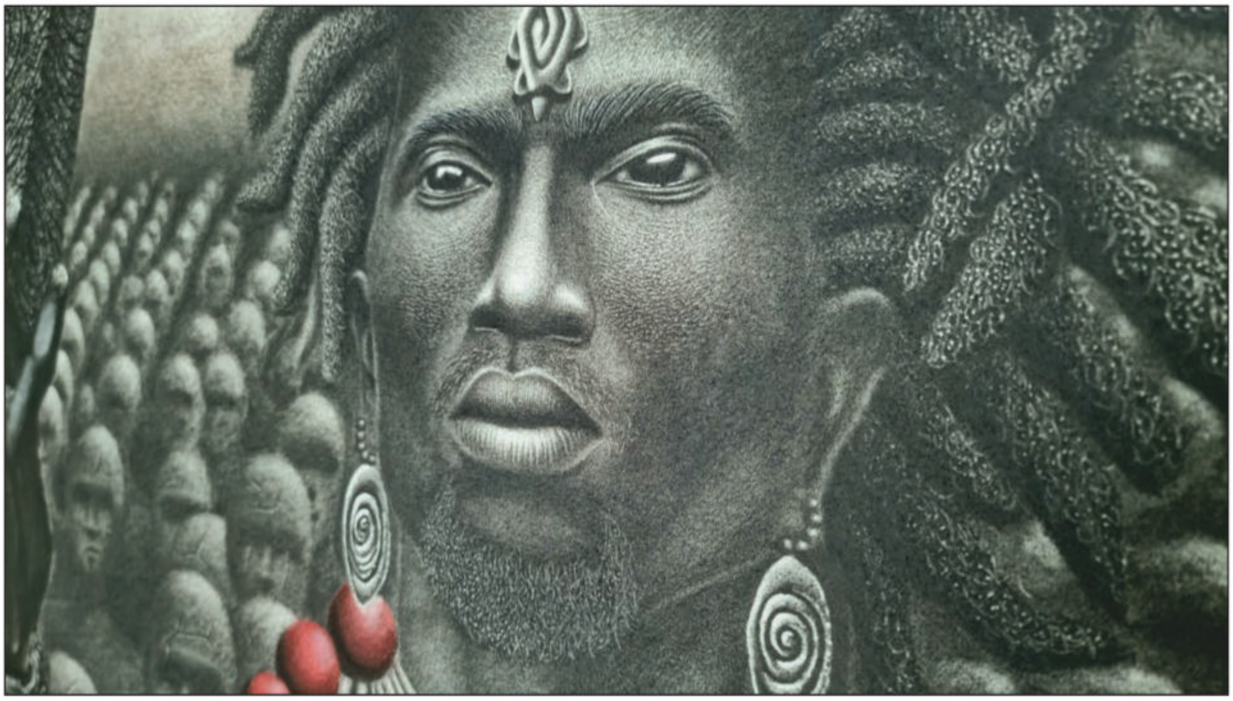

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~ Miracle Agom

To watch a collection of videos of Miracle working with Nitram Charcoal please visit: **https://nitramcharcoal.com/Agomjnr** or **scan the QR code.**

Miracle Agom is a Nigerian visual artist based in Cyprus, renowned for his hyperrealistic charcoal drawings that blur the line between imagination and reality. With a signature blend of technical mastery and emotional depth, Miracle's work often explores themes of identity, surrealism and the dreamlike layers of human experience. Driven by a commitment to pushing the boundaries of traditional drawings, his art has captivated an international audience.
Instagram.com/agom.jnr | Youtube.com/@Agomjnr

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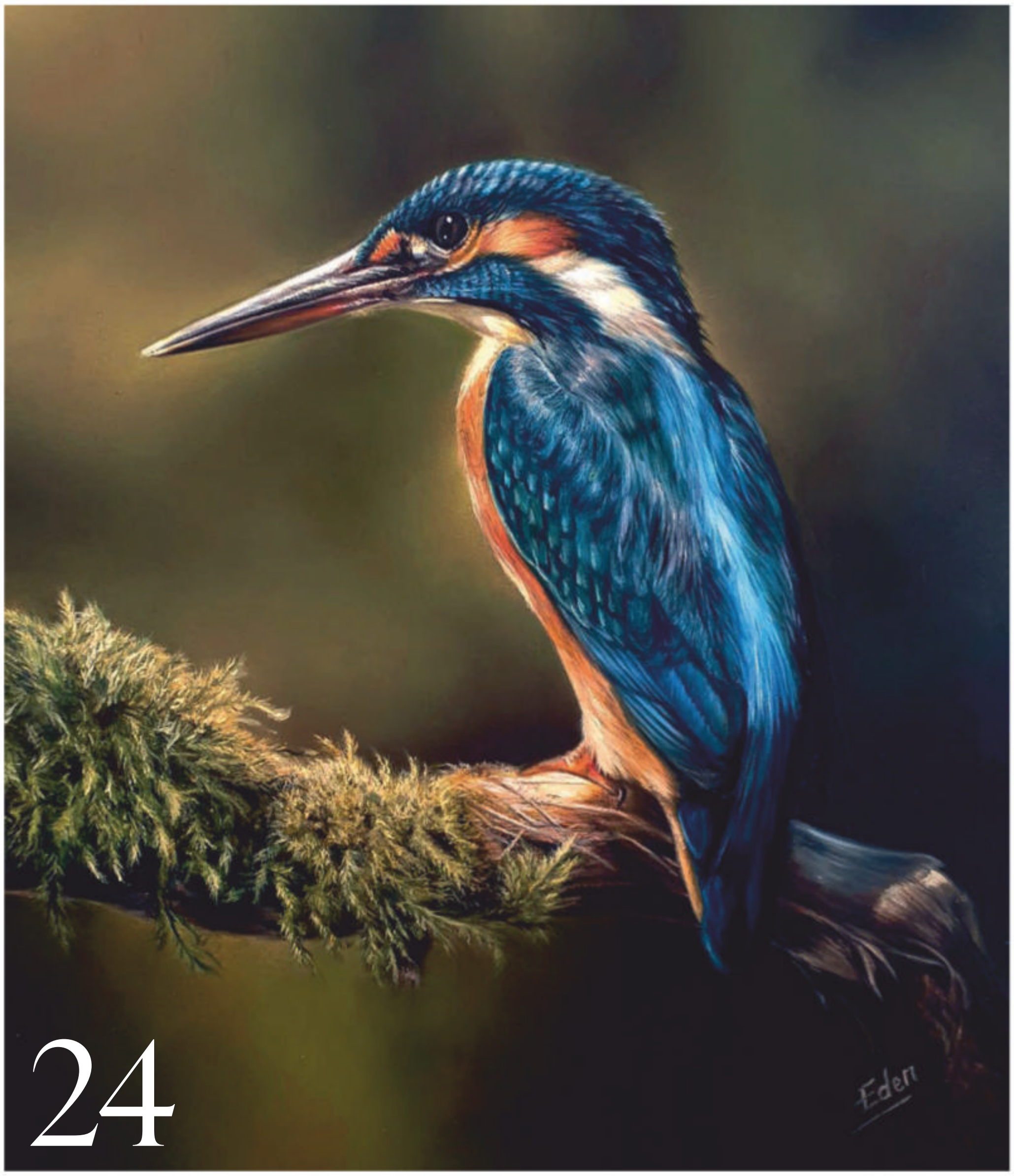

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THIS MONTH'S COVER BY MATTY BURNHAM

Flowers. Animals. Landscapes.

These are just some of the subjects that will keep you stimulated in your art practice as we bask in the final summer months. Get inspiration from Helena Boase who encourages you to take your easel outside; she points out that even the changing weather is a plus - after all, it encourages you to be quick, which may be a new way of working for you. Embrace it!

In the second part of his acrylic series, Hashim Akib shows you how to play with lights and darks, in this case, a scene from a picturesque village. Following his advice will help you enhance your focal point and draw in the viewer. Then, we also have an exclusive extract from Mark Stopforth on how to paint *alla prima* skies. So far, so outdoorsy.

Water-soluble pens are an ingenious way of creating watercolour effect without the paint. For a work in progress, see Paul Wilson's demonstration, using just two Stabilo colours for striking results.

We've got figure painting covered with a practical story in watercolour by Matthew Hadyn Jeanes, while we also look at the work of Jenny Saville, an original member of the Young British Artists whose large-scale painted depictions of nude women have led to her becoming one of the world's foremost contemporary painters. Portraits are covered, both human and animal, and a former finalist in the British Art Prize shows off her botanical work.

Talking of our esteemed annual art prize, entries are now open for this year's competition, where prizes include a solo show at leading London Gallery Panter and Hall, cash rewards, bundles of art supplies, editorial and an exhibition for the winners and finalists at gallery@oxo at the Southbank. Enter today to win big! Best of luck.

Niki Browes Editor

PPA AWARDS 2025
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INTRODUCING

HELENA BOASE

Helena is a British artist working primarily in oil paint who works largely from life, painting portraits, figurative art, still life and landscapes. She works at London Fine Art Studios alongside her own practice. For more information, go to her Instagram @helenaboaseartist

MARK STOPFORTH

Mark specialises in *alla prima* oil paintings, which he has been working at for thirty years. His contemporary work is inspired by 19th Century Masters of the romantic and the sublime, while he has exhibited on a number of occasions at the RWA and is represented by The Paragon Gallery, Cheltenham.

NATASHA MOTT

Natasha's paintings are energetic echoes of shared experiences and nostalgia. Growing up on a farm, she studied art and teaching before settling a short drive from the beach, where she now lives. Represented by galleries on the east and west coasts of Australia, her work often focuses on community.

PAUL M WILSON

Paul has been drawing all his life but only started showing his realistic animal portraits in 2015 when he discovered STABILO pastels. Now a STABILO influencer, he revels in helping to showcase their products and has expanded his range into drawing cartoons and writing children's books.

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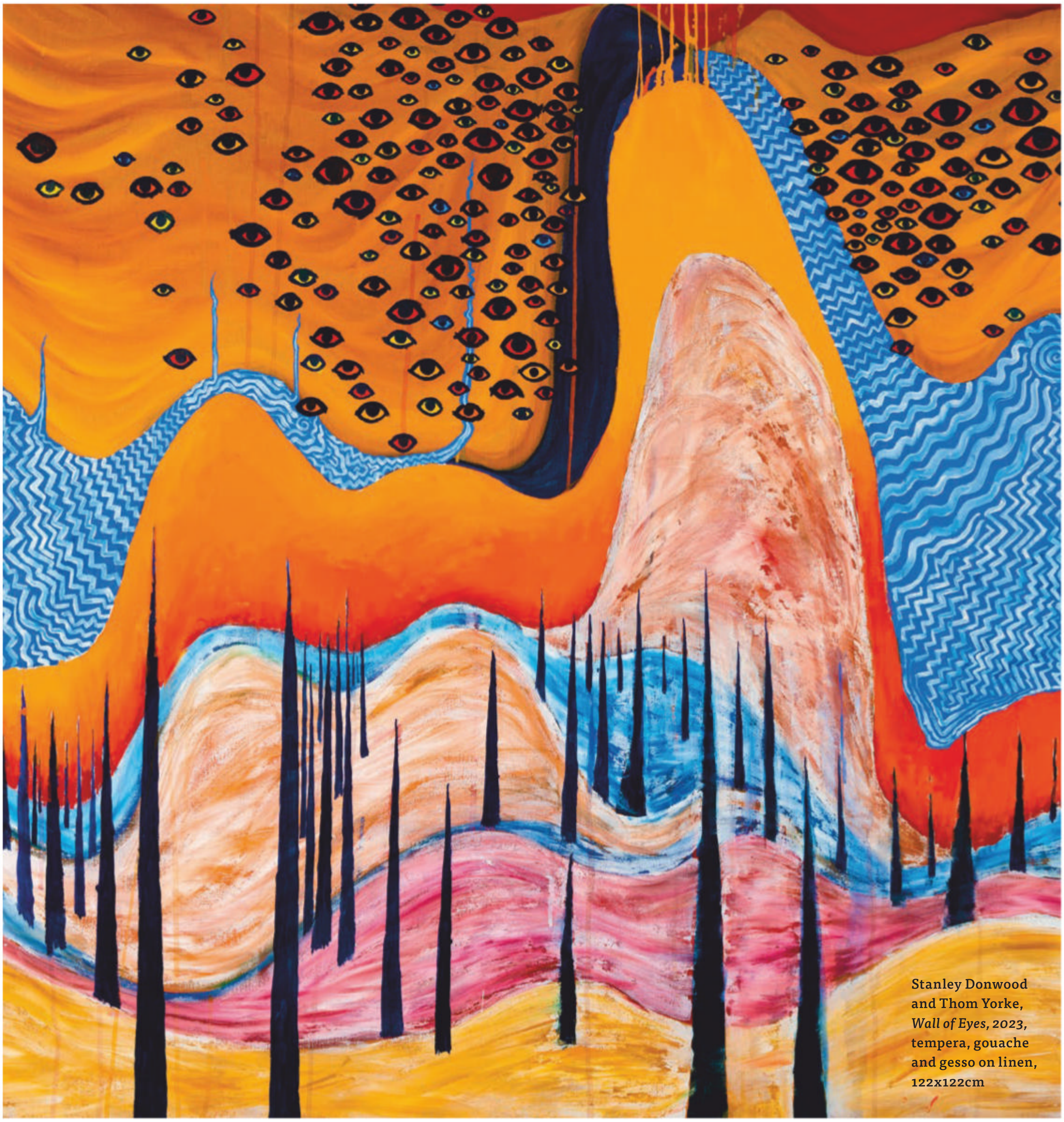
Sketchbook

TIPS • ADVICE • EXHIBITIONS • NEWS • REVIEWS

EDITED BY SARAH EDGHILL



Stanley Donwood and Thom Yorke, *Wall of Eyes*, 2023, tempera, gouache and gesso on linen, 122x122cm

PRIVATE COLLECTION ©STANLEY DONWOOD AND THOM YORKE

Editor's pick... A must-see for Radiohead fans, this show looks at the 30-year collaboration of artist Stanley Donwood and Radiohead's lead singer, Thom Yorke, alongside iconic images of the band. On display are original paintings for album covers, unpublished drawings and lyrics in sketchbooks. Thom and Stanley met at university and joined forces in 1994 to design the cover of the band's single *My Iron Lung* and related second album, *The Bends*. The exhibition explores the evolution of the images for the band's albums and Yorke's other musical projects. *From 6 August 2025 to 11 January 2026 at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford OX1 2PH.* **ashmolean.org** ◻

WILD IN ART, BULLS IN THE CITY ©BIRMINGHAM HOSPICE

Don't miss...

Wild in Art is organising a series of art trails across the country this summer, featuring sculptures designed and painted by local artists. You can follow these trails of discovery while exploring cities like Leicester, Cheltenham, Norwich, Aberdeen, Newcastle and Ipswich. Each trail follows a different theme – bulls in Birmingham, herds of elephants in Windsor and Slough, rabbits in Ipswich – with a series of majestic painted sculptures. Most of the trails run until the end of August, some continue into September. For more information on what's happening near you, visit ***wildinart.co.uk/events***

BOOK OF THE MONTH

THE BOOK COVER

Paul Dimond

Batsford Books has a long association with outstanding British design, publishing books on everything from architecture and travel to art and design. This new collection celebrates 150 years of the company's covers and is a fascinating history of the book cover as an art form. It is curated by Paul Dimond, who has spent the last 40 years sourcing Batsford Books from shops around the world, to add to his personal collection of 1200 titles.

Batsford Books, published 3 July, £30.00

THE
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PAUL DIMOND

GET CREATIVE

If you know of any budding young artists who are at a loose end over the summer holidays, why not suggest they enter the Copley Art Prize, which is an annual competition for primary school-aged children, who are invited to create art inspired by LS Lowry. The winner will see their work professionally framed and hung in The Lowry Galleries in Salford Quays, Manchester. Entries can be emailed to getcreative@thelowry.com or posted to The Copley Prize, The Lowry, Pier 8, Salford Quays, M50 3AZ.

PEIQI ZHOU, WINNER OF THE 2024 COPLEY PRIZE, HELPING HANG HER PAINTING IN THE LOWRY GALLERIES

Join us online!

These pages are packed with artistic inspiration, but if you're after more, explore the fabulous *Artists & Illustrators* website. A go-to resource for artists across all disciplines, it offers a wealth of practical guides, exciting competitions and engaging interviews. Discover even more creative resources and inspiration. See you there.

artistsandillustrators.co.uk

THE DIARY

Open calls, prizes and artist opportunities

30 JULY

Entries invited for the Boynes Artist Award from emerging, mid-career and established artists. Cash prizes of up to $2000. Entry $40 for three works. ***boynesartistaward.com***

20 AUGUST

Entries invited for the Royal Society of Portrait Painters: *Revealing the Human*. Open to all who draw; top prize £5,000. ***Artopps.co.uk/opportunities/rpdrawingprize***

22 AUGUST

Call for wildlife subjects for the Society of Wildlife Artists' 62nd Annual Exhibition: *The Natural Eye*, at The Mall Galleries. Entry £20. Open to non-members. ***mallgalleries.org.uk***

26 AUGUST

Call for the Bath Society of Artists' 120th Annual Open Exhibition, due to run from October to January 2026. Prizes of up to £2,000. ***bathsocietyofartists.oess1.uk/***

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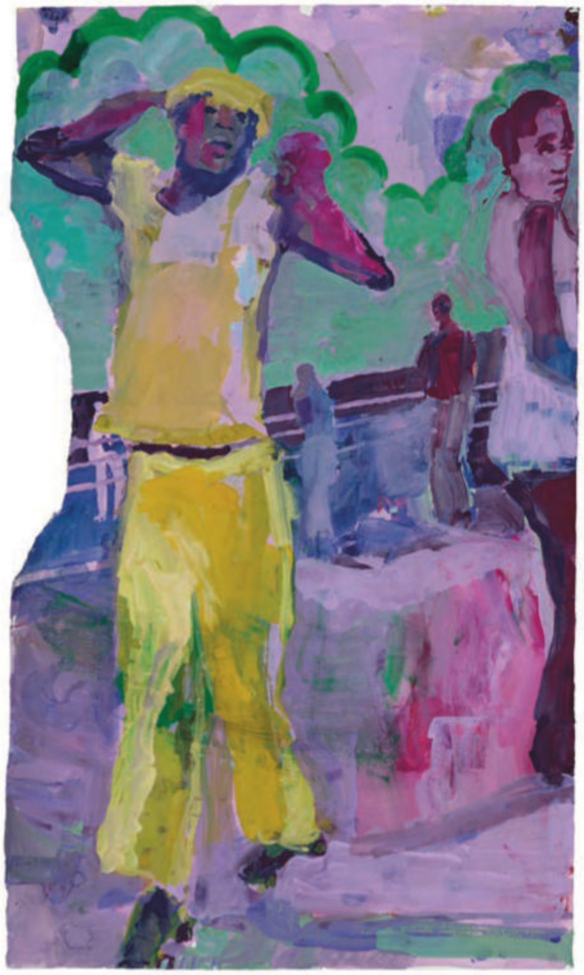
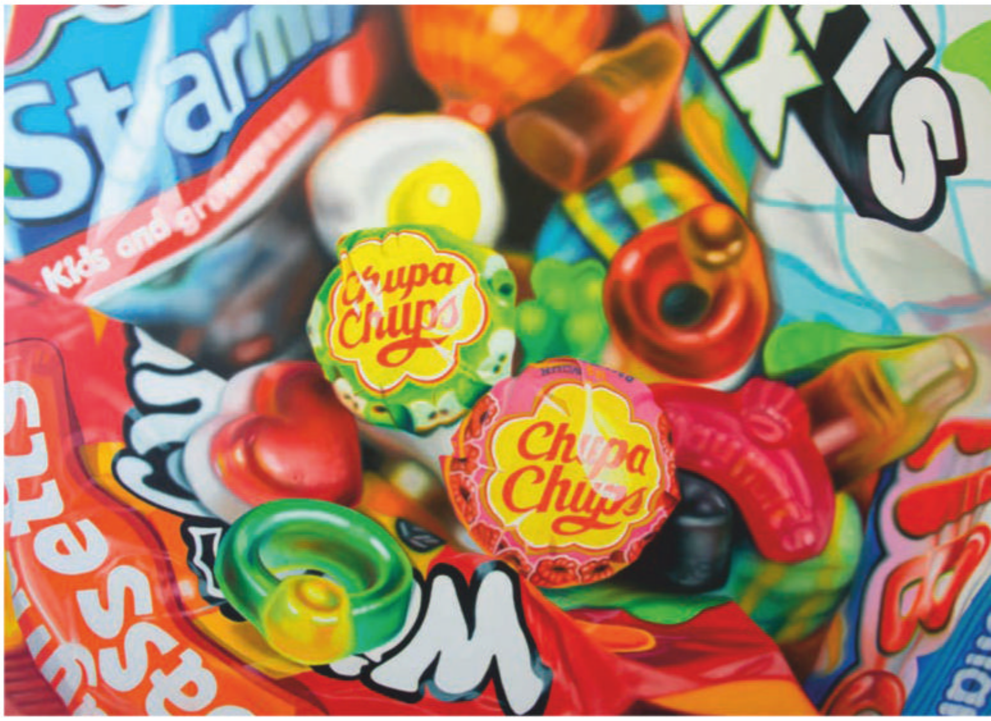


CHRISTINA KIMEZE, GET ROLLIN (I) 2024, GOUACHE ON PAPER 55X20CM ©MATTHEW HOLLOW

DRAWING LOTS

More than 50 drawings and personal reflections are on display at The Royal Drawing School, to mark its 25th anniversary. The exhibition will feature work by renowned artists and creative figures, including His Majesty King Charles III, Quentin Blake, Frank Bowling, Tim Burton, Tracey Emin, Norman Foster, Antony Gormley, David Hockney, Chantal Joffe and Charlie Mackesy. There will also be works by the School's alumni from the past 25 years, highlighting the central role of drawing across creative disciplines - including fine art, performance, film, architecture, illustration and design. Until 26 July at The Royal Drawing School, 19-22 Charlotte Road, London EC2A 3SH.

royaldrawingschool.org

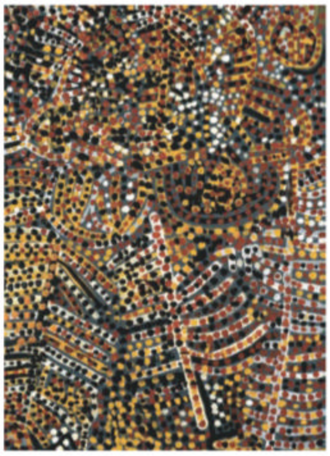


SWEETALLSTARS 80X115CM © SARAH GRAHAM

IMPACTING CREATIVITY

A new BBC documentary, *Heston: My Life with Bipolar*, follows the award-winning chef as he comes to terms with his diagnosis. As part of his personal and emotional exploration of a serious mental health condition that has a huge impact on energy and creativity levels, he talks to other people with the condition, including artist and friend of *Artists & Illustrators* Sarah Graham, who has battled with debilitating cycles of bipolar for years, and believes that "art saved her life".

Available on BBC iPlayer



EMILY KAM KNGWARRAY, EMU WOMAN 1988-89, JANET HOLMES À COURT COLLECTION

MONUMENTAL AUSTRALIAN ART

A new exhibition at Tate Modern shows the powerful works of Australian artist, Emily Kam Kngwarray, and includes textiles, paintings, audio works and film. For Aboriginal people, the concept of Country encompasses the lands, skies and waters to which they have been connected across countless generations, and this first large-scale presentation of Kngwarray's work to be held anywhere in Europe, reflects her life as an Anmatyerr woman born in the Northern Territory.
From 10 July to 11 January 2026 at Tate Modern, Bankside, London SE1 9TG. ***tate.org.uk***

RACHEL SALE @ VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON

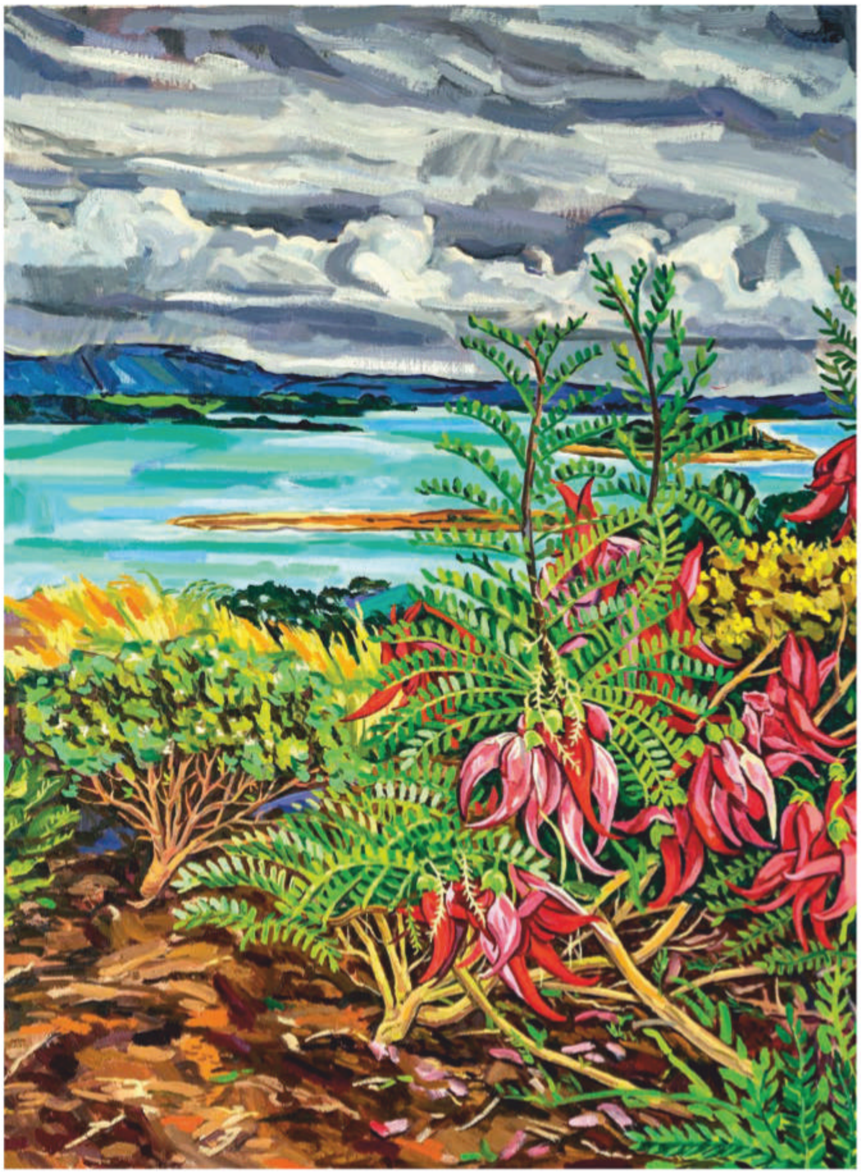
WORK IN PROGRESS

Each month, the Victoria & Albert Museum hosts Open Studio events featuring the V&A's current Adobe Creative Residents, who will be opening their studio on-site in South Kensington so visitors can learn about their practice and processes. This is part of a year-long programme at the museum, helping artists develop their skills through researching the V&A collections. Open on 25 July, 6-9pm, and 30 August, 1-4pm, at the Residency Studios, V&A South Kensington, Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL.

vam.ac.uk/whatson

Exhibitions

THE BEST ART SHOWS TO VISIT FROM THIS MONTH ONWARDS



KAKABEAK AT OHIWA DOMAIN, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

NATURE/NURTURE

Until 21 July 2025

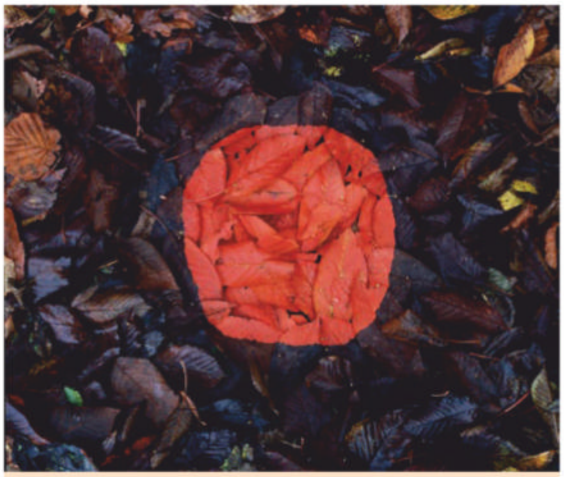
A solo exhibition by Sarah Jane Moon, a New Zealand-born British painter known for bold portraits that explore identity, gender and connection to place. Working primarily in oil, Sarah's figurative paintings are rich in colour, gesture and surface. This show features large-scale portraits of influential UK-based LGBTQIA+ figures – including writer Diana Souhami and activist Peter Tatchell – shown alongside recent work from Aotearoa New Zealand, which includes intimate portraits of queer friends in richly observed landscapes, together with vivid studies of native birds and flora. The exhibition's title, *Nature/Nurture*, reflects both debates around identity and the artist's bicultural heritage. ***Downstairs, The Department Store 248 Ferndale Rd, London SW9 8FR. downstairsbrixton.com***

LILIANE LIJN ARISE ALIVE. TATE PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF OLIVER COWLING

ARISE ALIVE

Until 2 November 2025

This exhibition is about the career of Liliane Ljin, an artist whose wide-ranging practice includes sculpture, installation, painting, drawing, collage, video and performance. Liliane was one of the first women artists to create kinetic works, and this show explores the intersection of her poetry, art and science, combining surrealism, mythology, philosophy, scientific innovation and feminism. ***Tate St Ives, Porthmeor Beach, St Ives TR26 1TG. tate.org.uk***

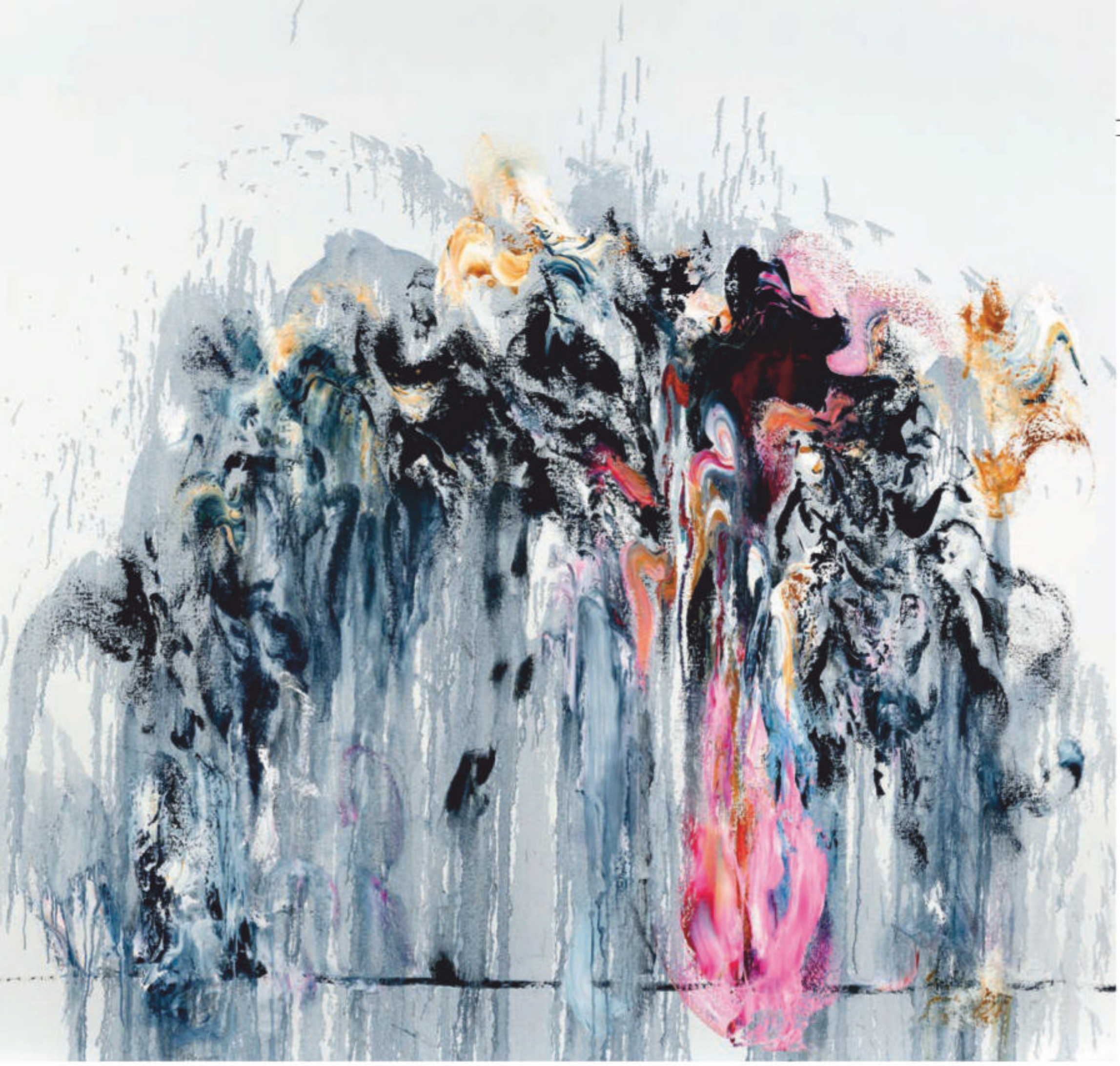


EDGES MADE BY FINDING LEAVES THE SAME SIZE. TEARING ONE IN TWO. SPITTING UNDERNEATH AND PRESSING FLAT ON TO ANOTHER. BROUGH CUMBRIA. CHERRY PATCH. 4 NOVEMBER 1984. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

ANDY GOLDSWORTHY: FIFTY YEARS

26 July to 2 November 2025

On display will be more than 200 works by the international artist, now living in Scotland, who is famous for his work with natural materials, including sculptures, installations and photographs. ***Royal Scottish Academy, The Mound, Edinburgh EH2 2EL. royalscottishacademy.org***



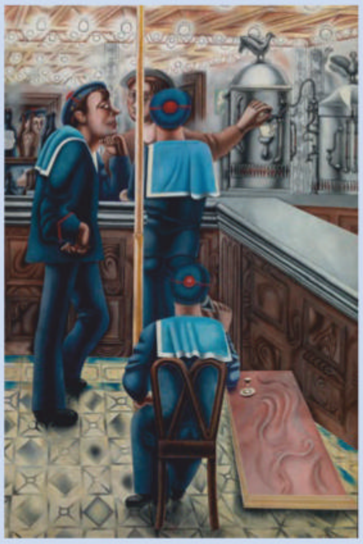
MAGGI HAMBLING, WALL OF WATER VIII, 2011, OIL ON CANVAS. COPYRIGHT MAGGI HAMBLING

A WORLD OF WATER

Until 3 August 2025

This exhibition brings together works by British and international artists from the last 250 years, including Maggi Hambling, Eva Rothschild, Julian Charrière, John Crome and Ólafur Elíasson. Much of our shared experience of the British summer involves water, but what would the world be like without it; without our oceans and all the lifeforce within them? Taking the North Sea and the historical relationship between Norfolk and the Netherlands as its starting point, the exhibition looks at the human impact on the sea, and the artworks on display encourage visitors to recognise the precarious nature of our waters and to learn about the complexity of sea and marine life, raising awareness and working towards fostering a collective global effort to mitigate the impact of climate change.

The Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia, Norfolk Road, Norwich NR4 7TJ. sainsburycentre.ac.uk



EDWARD BURRA, THREE SAILORS AT A BAR 1930. PRIVATE COLLECTION COURTESY OF HAZLITT HOLLAND-HIBBERT. COURTESY OF THE ESTATE OF EDWARD BURRA

EDWARD BURRA | ITHELL COLQUHOUN

Until 19 October 2025

Renowned for his vibrant scenes of the uninhibited urban underworld and queer culture during the roaring twenties, Edward Burra pushed the boundaries of watercolour to create bold, vivid work. The exhibition features more than 80 of his paintings and drawings, together with material from the Tate's Edward Burra archive. Running in parallel is an exhibition of works by Ithell Colquhoun, an important figure in British Surrealism in the 1940s, who created an enthralling universe through her writings, drawings and paintings, many of which are on show for the first time.

Linbury Galleries, Tate Britain, Millbank, London SW1P 4RG. tate.org.uk

STORIES BROUGHT TO LIFE

Until 31 August 2025

Discover the stories behind some of the nation's favourite portraits at this immersive art experience inspired by the National Portrait Gallery and created by FRAMELESS. Learn about the fascinating human stories of leaders and national heroes who have shaped the UK's history and culture – from Churchill and Charles Darwin, to Jane Austen and David Bowie.

The Piazza, Media City, Salford Quays, Manchester M50 2EQ. npgunframed.com

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Bring out the best in your artwork by using the Derwent Push Button Waterbrushes, which are suitable for use with water-soluble pencils and paints. The nylon fibre points and chisel tips of these assorted waterbrushes allow artists to create a range of strokes, and the large water barrel has a push button for easy control water release. *derwentart.com* □

THE PRIZE

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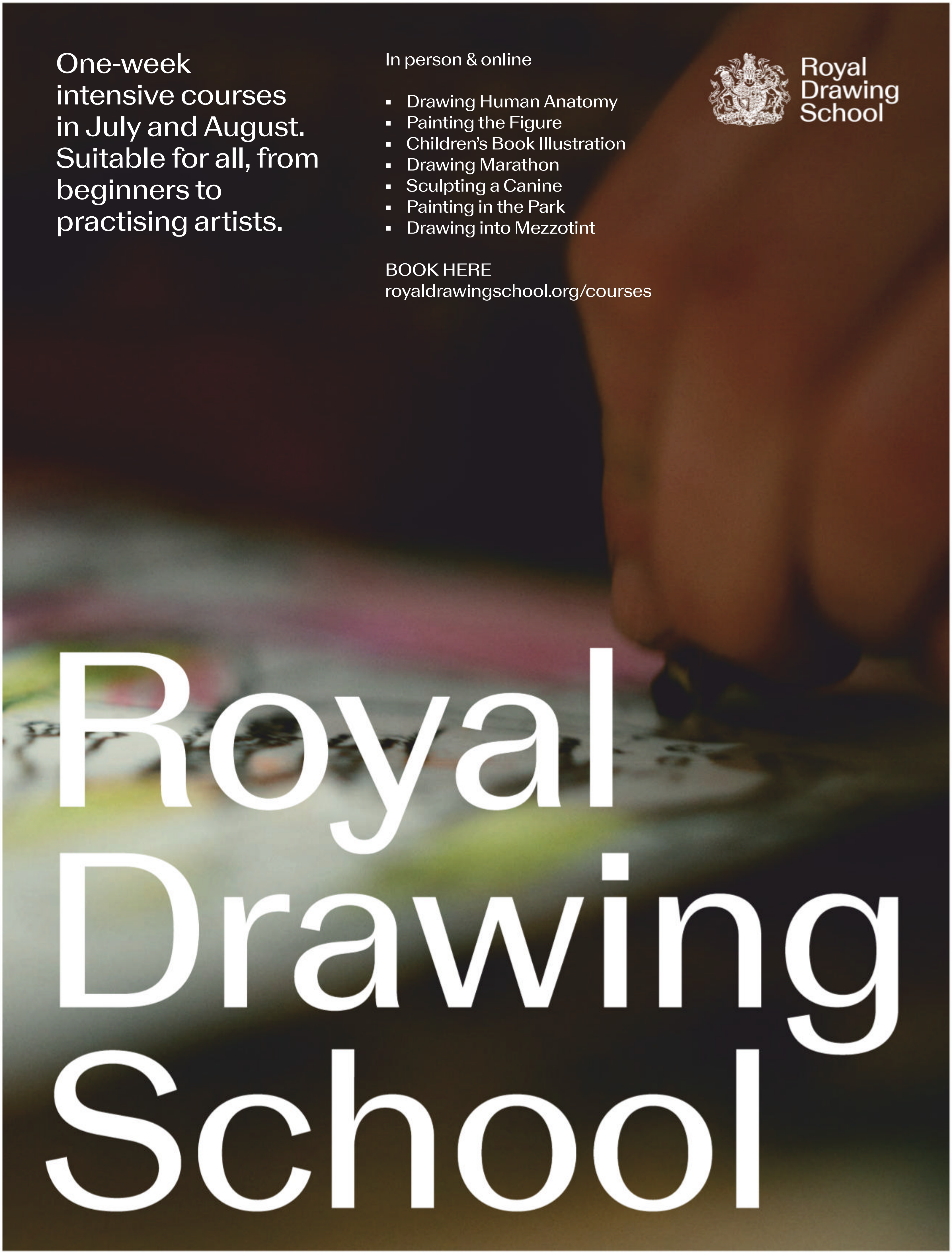

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This month's spotlight on a British Art Club member

We present...

DAVID DOUGLAS

This artist captures everyday moments with precision and movement

David Douglas is a representational artist whose work captures both notable landmarks and the beauty of everyday life. "I render places of interest from my travels as well as everyday objects and situations," he says. His practice is rooted in observation, bringing familiar scenes to life with striking detail and subtle movement.

David's interest in art began early, at the age of five. "I thought there was something magic about creating art," he recalls. A childhood memory of painting maroon peonies in his garden remains vivid; an early moment that shaped his creative sensibility.

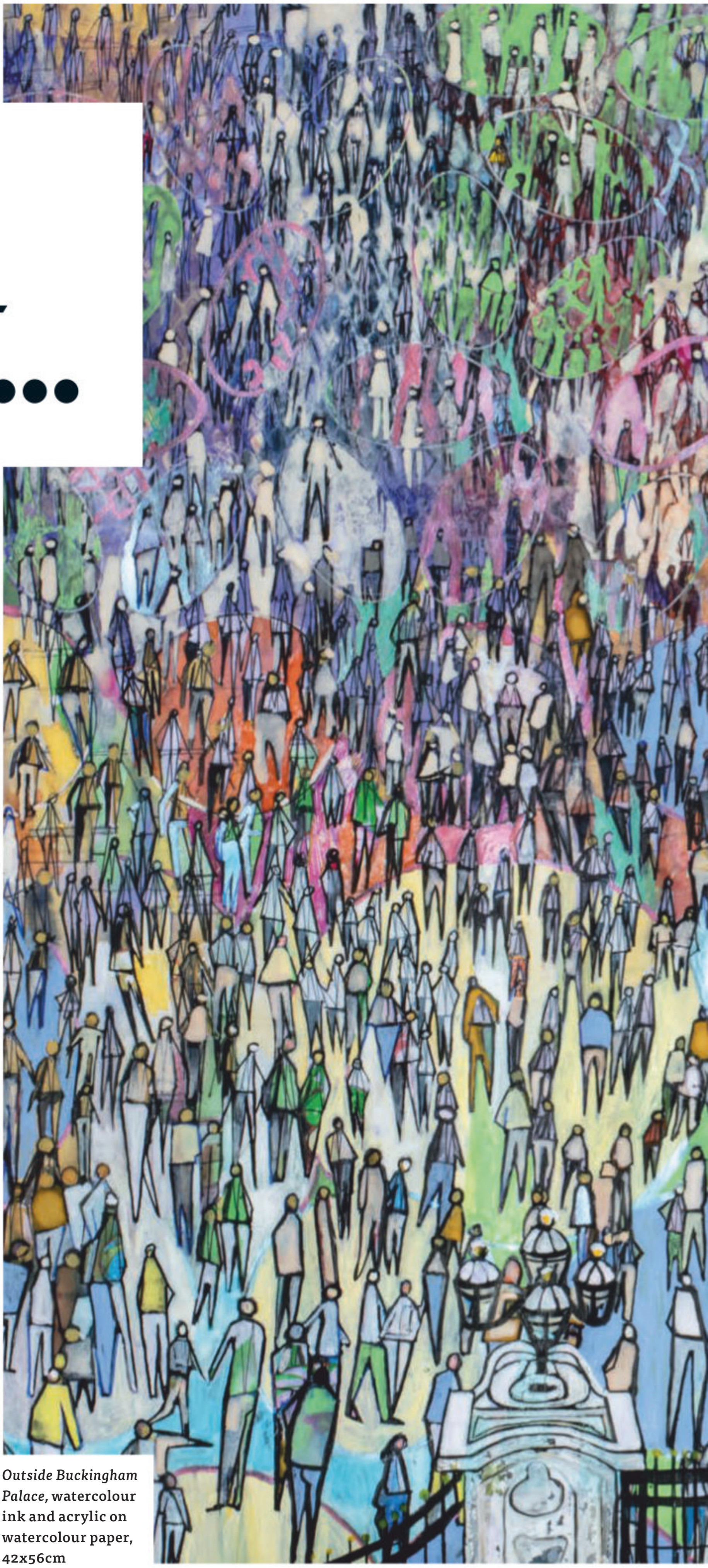
Formally trained at Northampton School of Art and later at Maidstone College of Art, David refined his skills through rigorous study. His work has since been exhibited at prestigious institutions, including the Royal Watercolour Society and the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. "My studies have formed the basis of many of my skills and techniques," he says.

His painting, *Outside Buckingham Palace*, exemplifies his approach to composition and movement. "I wanted to create a painting with numerous figures outside the Palace Gates, underpinned by geometric shapes that guide the viewer's eye." A light pastel palette was chosen: "to convey a joyous, spring-like mood."

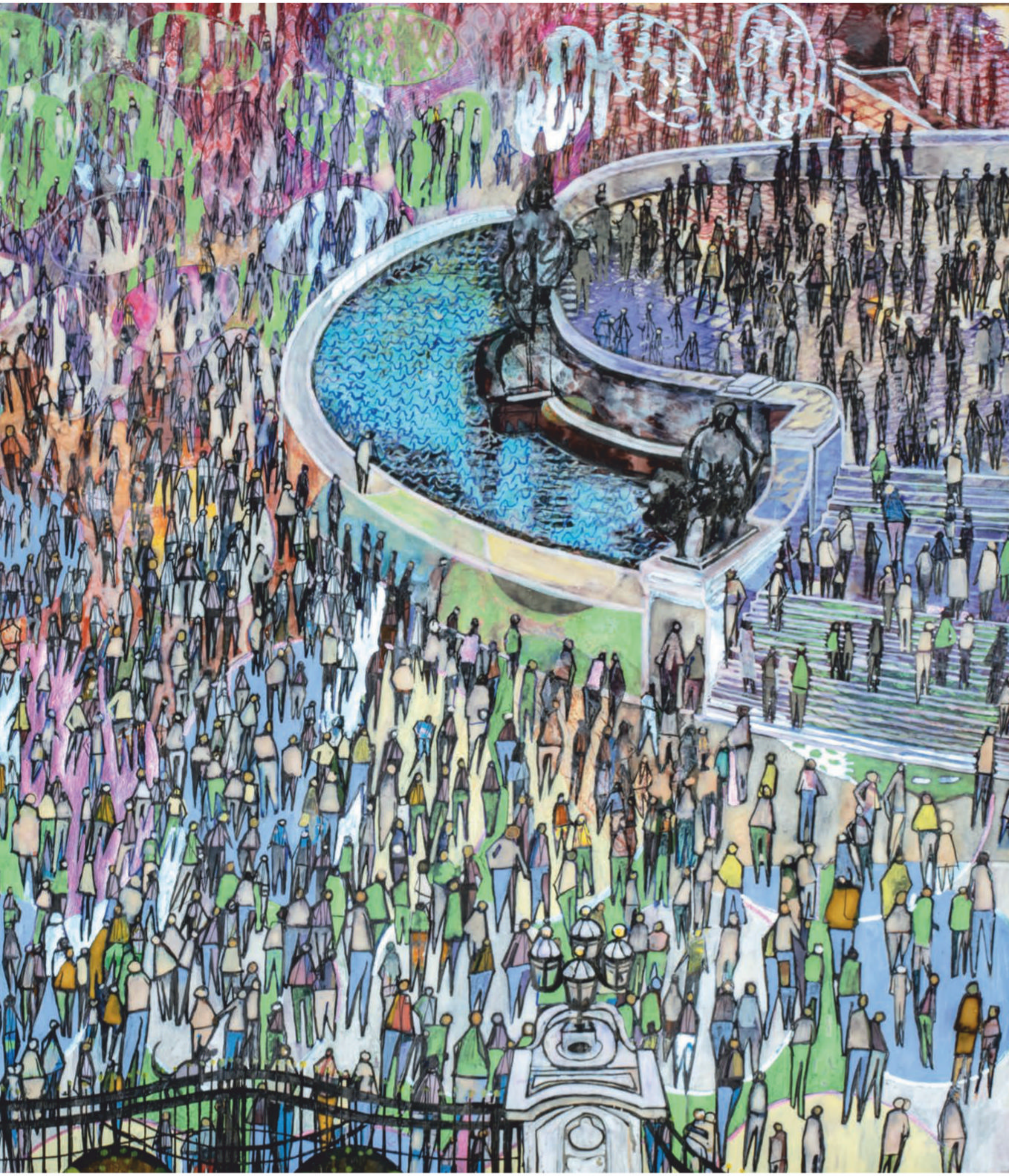
The artist's creative process is guided by instinct, particularly when determining when a piece is completed. "In my practice, I let my instincts tell me if a work is finished," David explains. "A successful balance of colour and composition, amongst other things, needs to work, and then I stop." This intuitive approach ensures that each piece retains a sense of harmony, while allowing room for the viewer's interpretation.

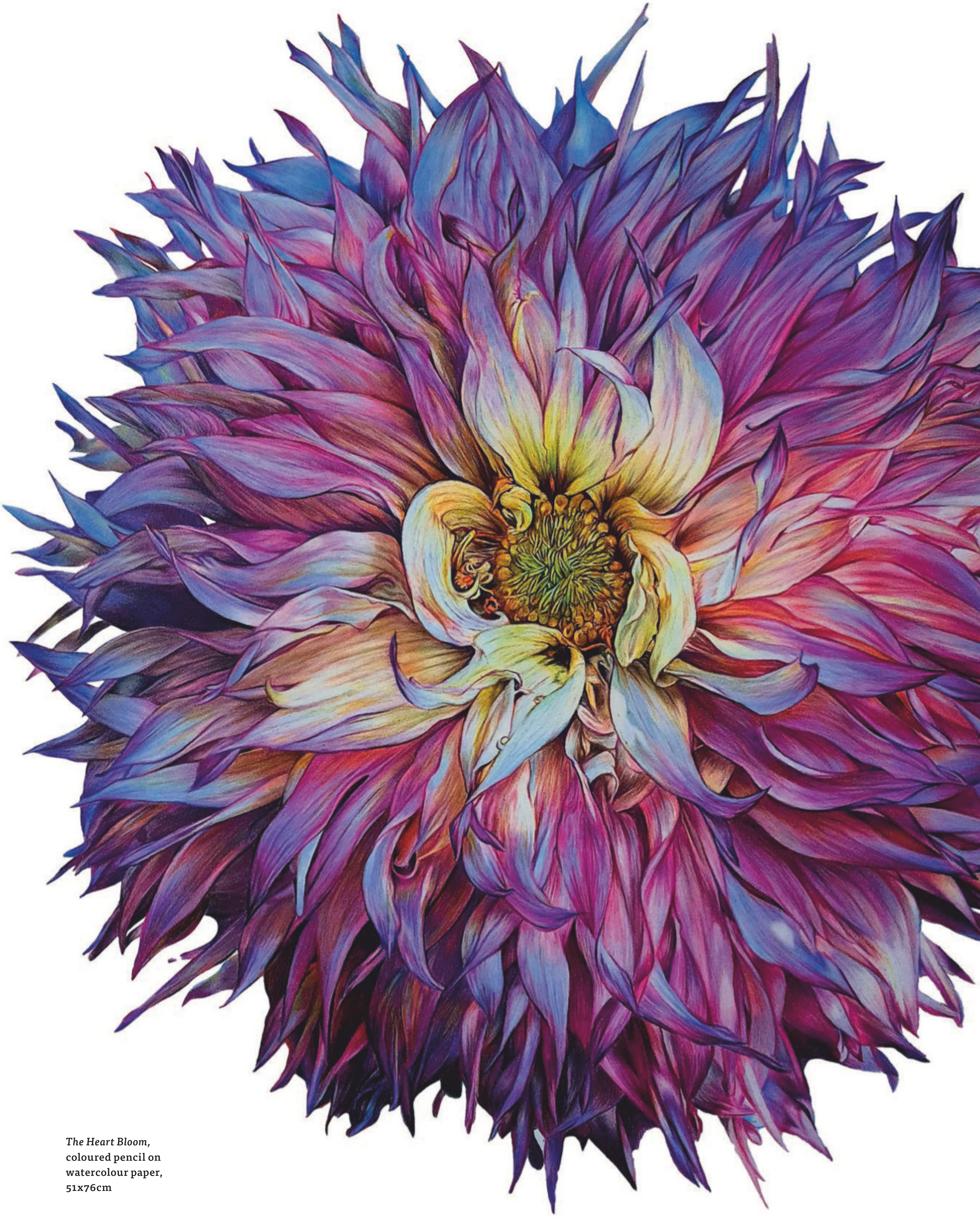
David is influenced by artists such as Francis Bacon, Graham Sutherland and Jenny Saville but, ultimately, his work is a reflection of personal experience. "All of us are unique and individual. Some of us happen to paint," he notes. For David, success lies in engagement. "If you look at a work and see something different each time, then that can't be a bad thing."

britishartclub.co.uk/profile/david-douglas □



***Outside Buckingham Palace*, watercolour ink and acrylic on watercolour paper, 42x56cm**





The Heart Bloom, coloured pencil on watercolour paper, 51x76cm

Sun-Kyong Clifford

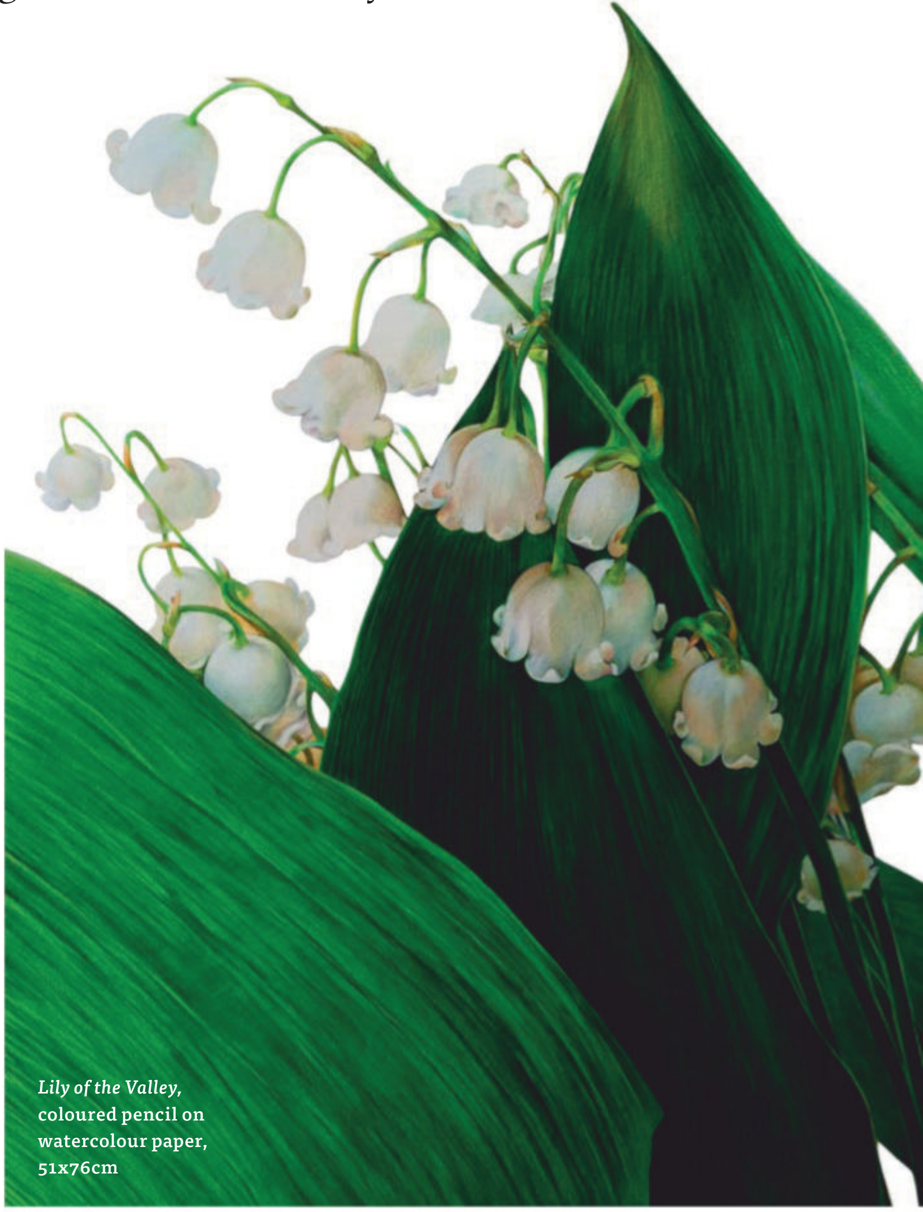
This self-taught coloured pencil artist, based in South Wales, needs space and light to create her collections of wildlife and botanical paintings. She tells *Sarah Edghill* about the intensity of her work

Sun-Kyong Clifford’s art is full of colour and joy, and she throws herself into each new project with boundless enthusiasm. This is despite the fact that, every time she starts a piece, she knows it will take her at least a hundred hours of intense work to complete it. “I remember my first 100-hour piece and thought it was unbelievable to have spent that much time on one drawing,” she says. “Now, it has become the norm.”

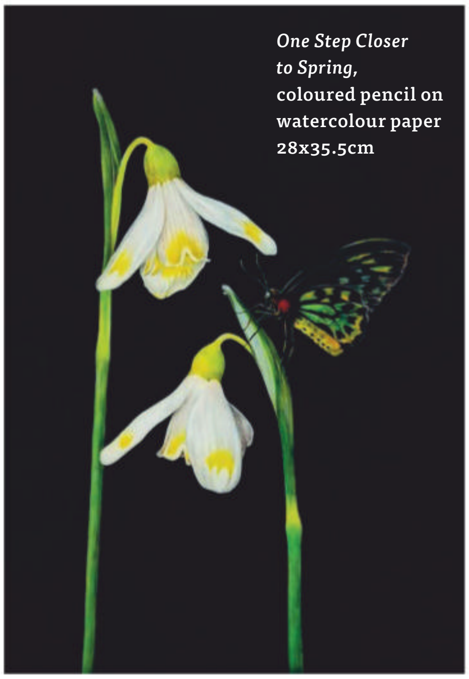
Art and creativity were important to Sun as a child, from doing creative writing and animation at school, to taking part in a performance club at university. But growing up in South Korea, her path was heavily influenced by parental expectations. “My parents held a different vision for my future and anything ‘arty’ was considered a waste of my time and a distraction from my studies,” she explains. “They encouraged me to follow a more stable career path, which ultimately led me to become a kindergarten teacher.”

Sun loved her teaching work, and it did allow her to be creative – from planning art projects to painting murals in the classrooms. Then, after becoming a mother, she decorated nursery and playroom walls with Disney themes and floral designs. But it wasn’t until she was in her late thirties that she unexpectedly found herself on the path to becoming a professional artist.

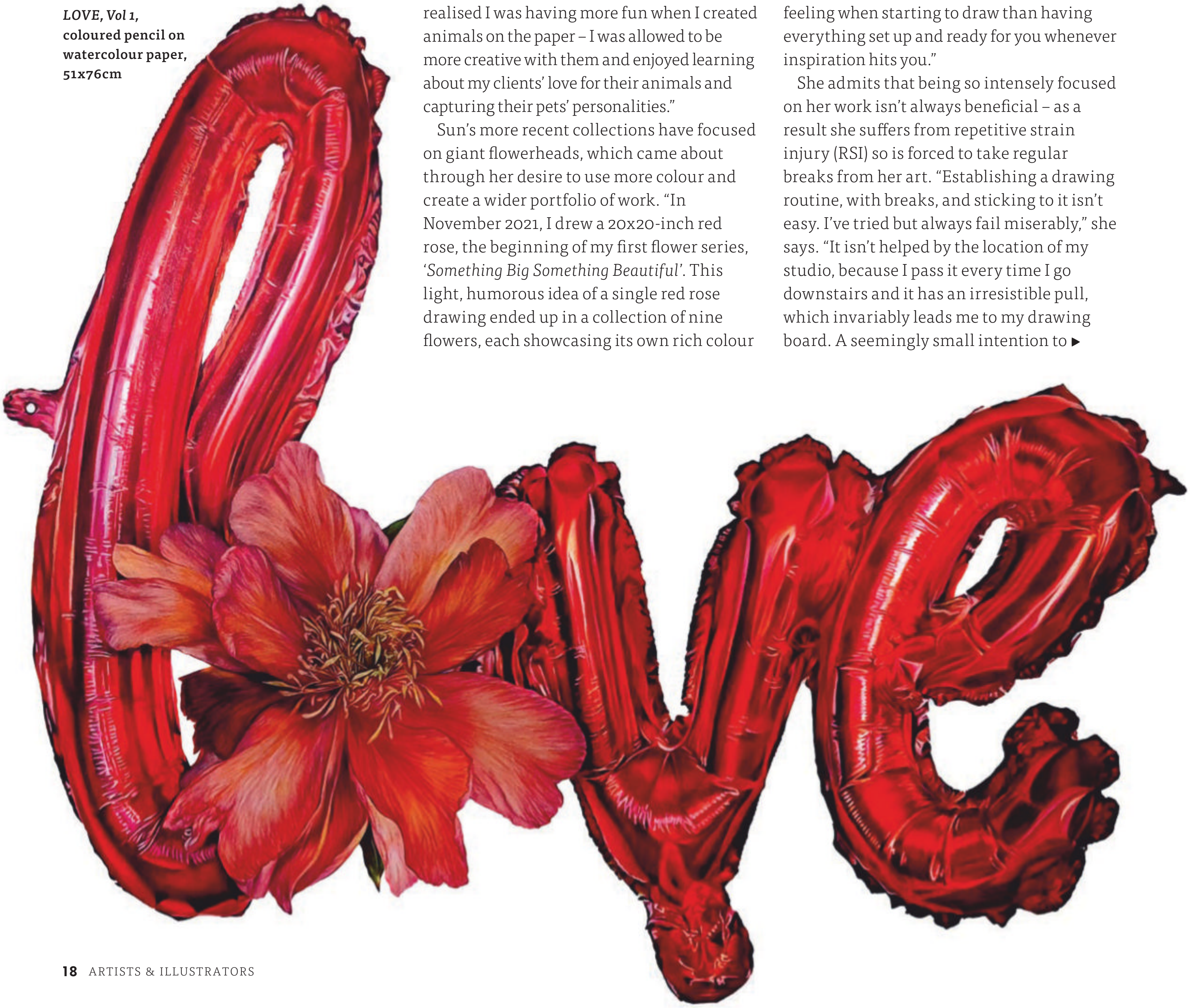
“I accompanied my mother-in-law to a local art club,” she remembers. “Up to that point, I’d never had any formal art training, so being in this relaxed yet creatively stimulating environment, filled with ▶



***Lily of the Valley*, coloured pencil on watercolour paper, 51x76cm**



One Step Closer to Spring, coloured pencil on watercolour paper 28x35.5cm



LOVE, Vol 1, coloured pencil on watercolour paper, 51x76cm

wonderful like-minded artists, captivated me immediately. From that first Wednesday lesson, I was hooked and started drawing every single day."

She initially used graphite and charcoal, but received a set of coloured pencils the following Christmas, and fell in love with the medium. "I showed one of my first animal drawings to a fellow mum to see if she thought I was good enough to offer a service for commissions, and had such a warm and encouraging review of my drawing. Not long afterwards, I had my first paid commission. I then launched my small business, Fine Art by Sun and by 2019, I was booked up seven months in advance. Launching business pages on Facebook and Instagram opened up a stream of global commissions, which was both overwhelming and incredibly exciting."

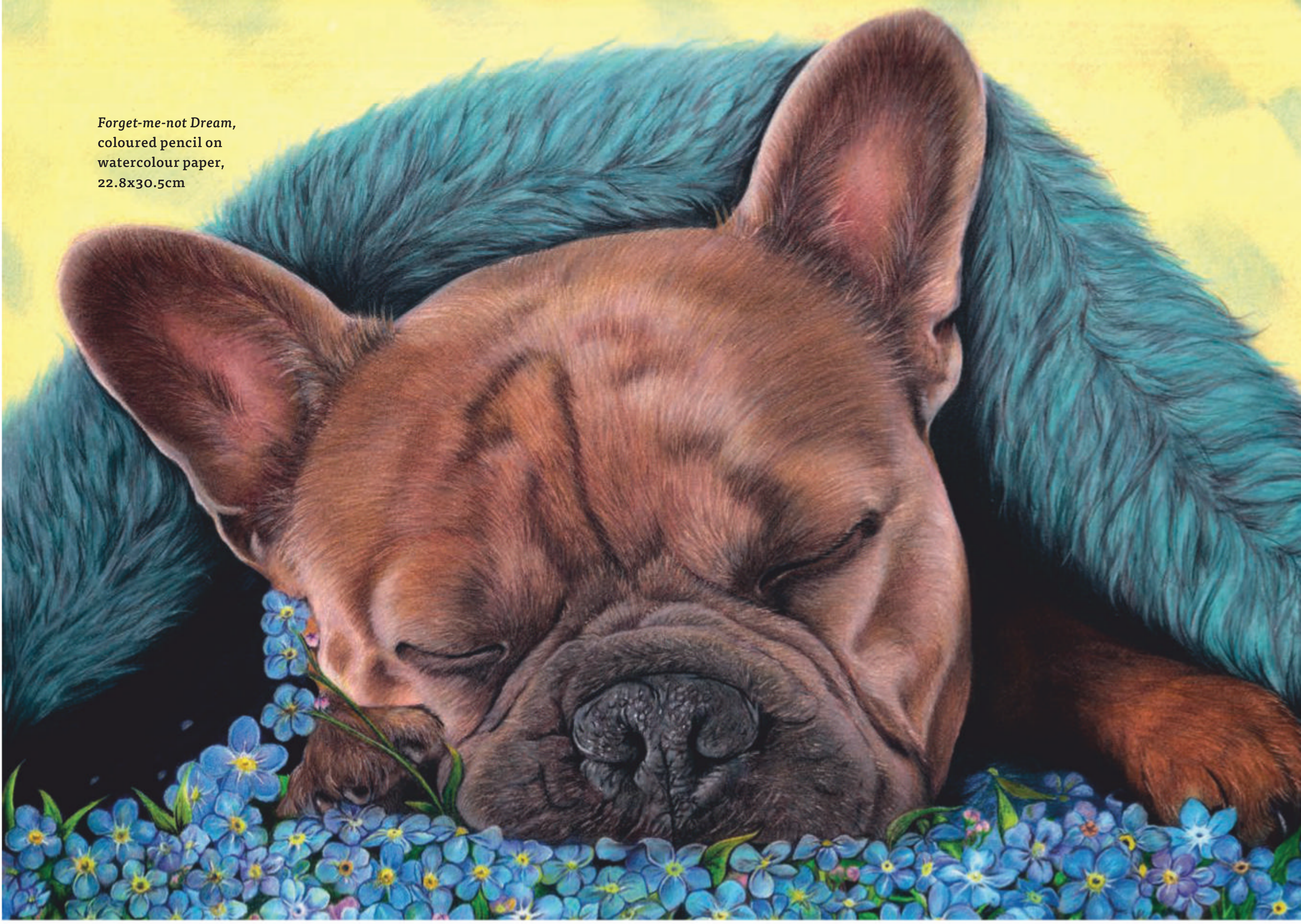
Initially Sun drew pet and people portraits. "As a newbie in the art world, I was excited to draw anything and everything. But soon I realised I was having more fun when I created animals on the paper – I was allowed to be more creative with them and enjoyed learning about my clients' love for their animals and capturing their pets' personalities."

Sun's more recent collections have focused on giant flowerheads, which came about through her desire to use more colour and create a wider portfolio of work. "In November 2021, I drew a 20x20-inch red rose, the beginning of my first flower series, '*Something Big Something Beautiful*'. This light, humorous idea of a single red rose drawing ended up in a collection of nine flowers, each showcasing its own rich colour palette and distinct personality."

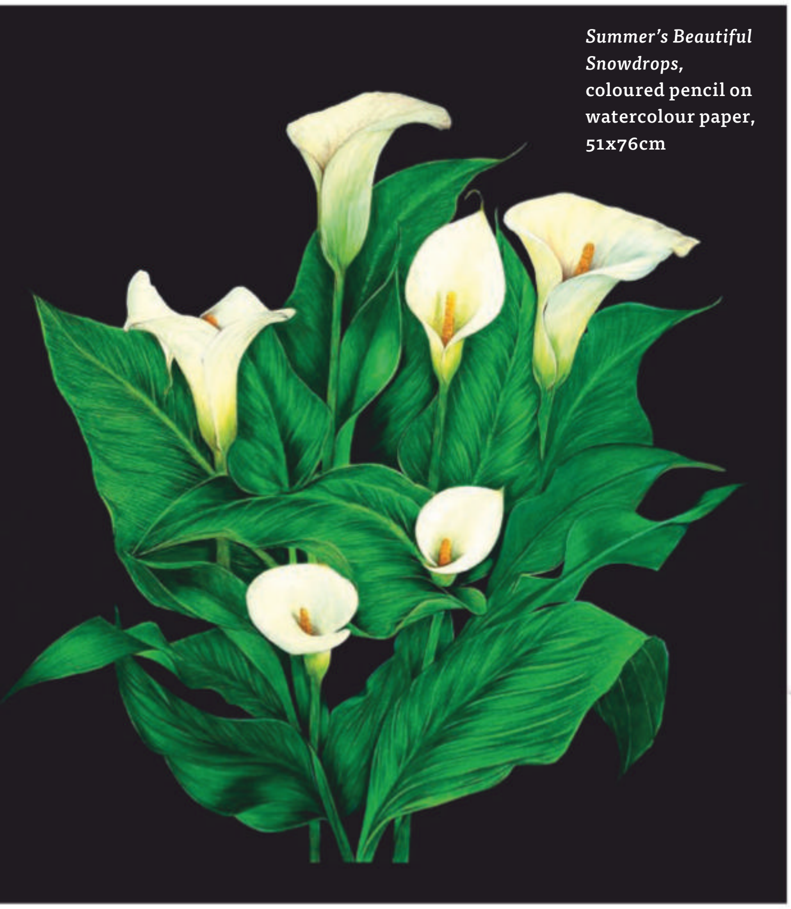
Using coloured pencil, it takes time and patience to render intricate details and build the colour intensity she strives for, which is why each drawing can take more than 100 hours to complete. "I can still create smaller pieces in less time but my current focus is on larger pieces."

Sun describes her studio as the place where time slows down and flowers grow on the paper: an environment that inspires serenity and peace. "My little studio has transitioned over the past seven years, from a humble corner of the dining room table to a permanently established area within the living room, offering a sense of both connection to the home and its own defined area to be free and creative," she says. "My current set-up is designed for drawing large projects and recording my creative process, and it's where I can photograph my artwork with full natural light. There isn't a better feeling when starting to draw than having everything set up and ready for you whenever inspiration hits you."

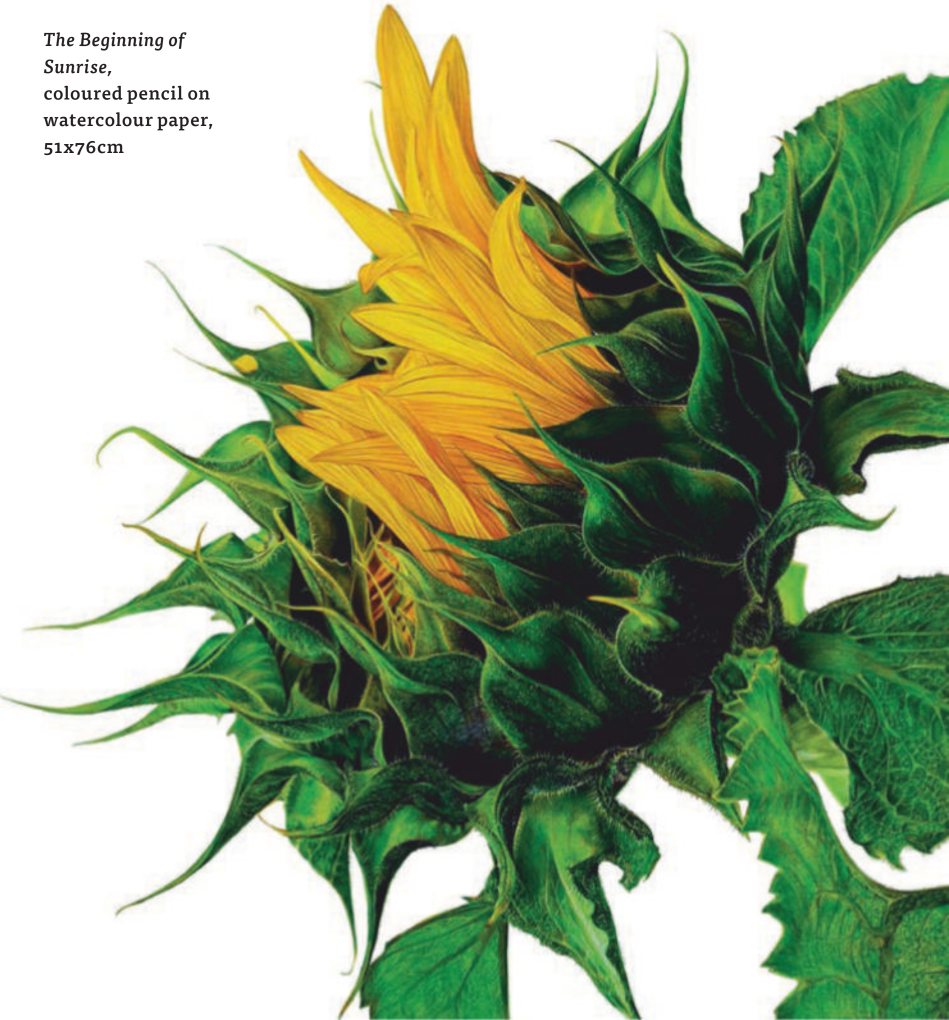
She admits that being so intensely focused on her work isn't always beneficial – as a result she suffers from repetitive strain injury (RSI) so is forced to take regular breaks from her art. "Establishing a drawing routine, with breaks, and sticking to it isn't easy. I've tried but always fail miserably," she says. "It isn't helped by the location of my studio, because I pass it every time I go downstairs and it has an irresistible pull, which invariably leads me to my drawing board. A seemingly small intention to ▸



Forget-me-not Dream,
coloured pencil on
watercolour paper,
22.8x30.5cm



Summer's Beautiful Snowdrops,
coloured pencil on
watercolour paper,
51x76cm



The Beginning of Sunrise,
coloured pencil on
watercolour paper,
51x76cm

tweak something a little or give a drawing a small touch up, can easily consume hours."

Sun's work is based on hyper-realism so having good quality reference photographs is very important. "I capture multiple images, which I then edit to achieve my desired aesthetic. These edited photos serve as the basis for my drawings, transferring the composition to paper using the grid method. Importantly, while grounded in reality, my artistic expression often leads me to alter the details, hues and saturation according to my emotional state and how I want to represent the subject in the moment."

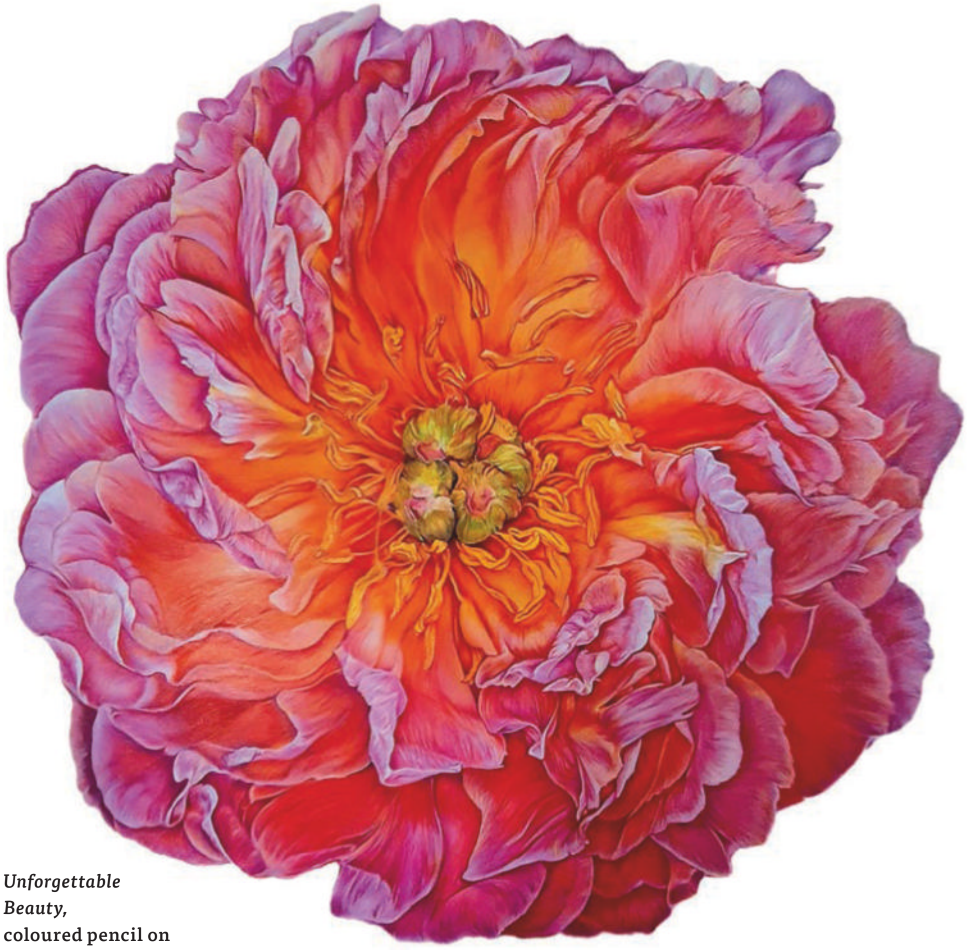
When a project is finished, she sometimes has to work through a period of artistic block. "It almost feels like a giant balloon has left my hands and I don't know what to do with them once they're empty. When it hits, it hits me hard. This is the time I take a step back from my drawing board for as long as I need and take a true break. Sometimes this can be a few days or a few weeks, but only then will I be able to return to my drawing board fully recharged, emotionally and physically, ready to start again."

My studio has an irresistible pull, which leads me to my drawing board

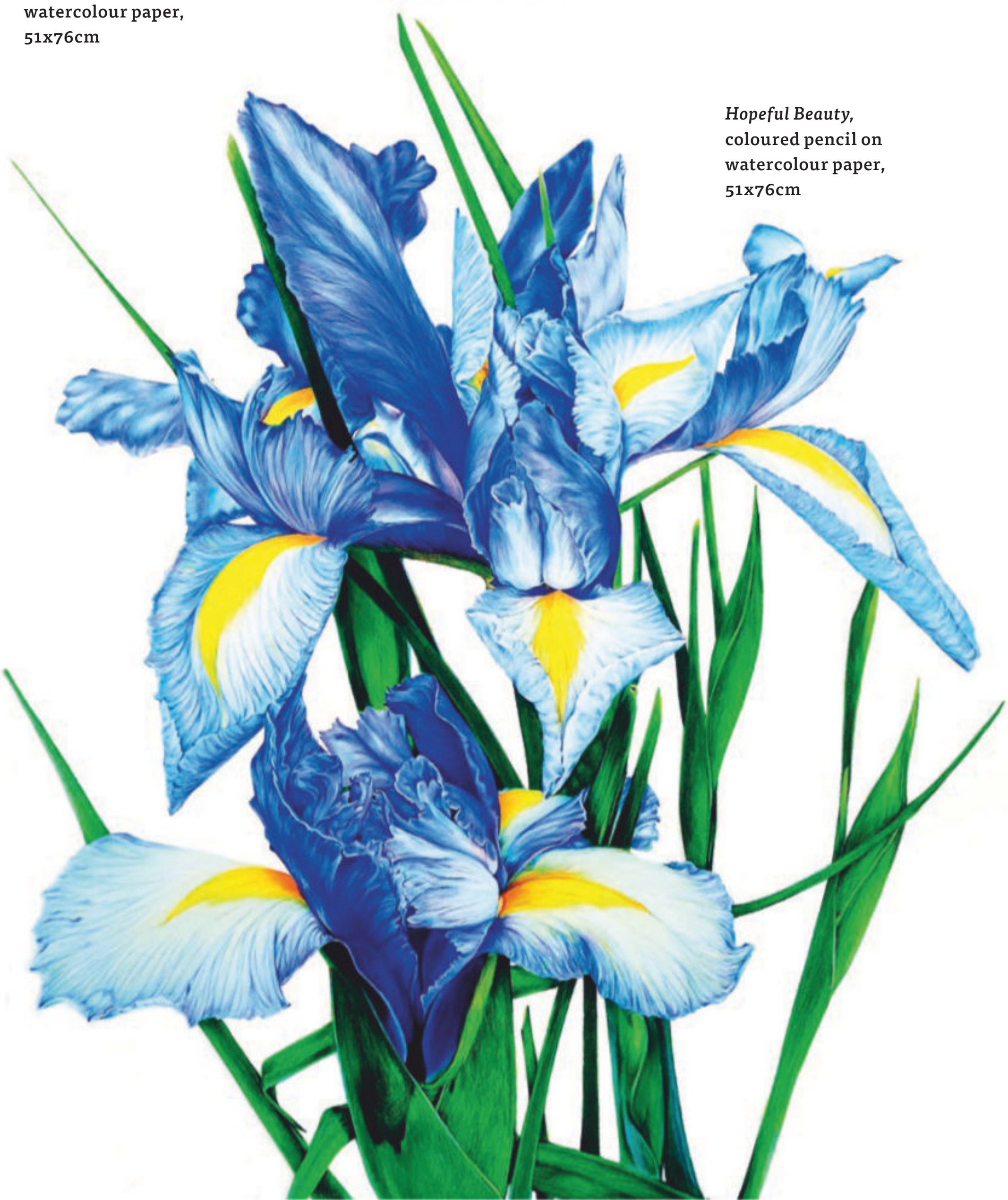
This talented artist admits she's a perfectionist. "I've come to believe that perfect artwork, at least to my own eye, is an elusive concept. My husband tells me I'm my own toughest critic. I think the more we create and learn, the more we want to put into each piece. Sometimes though it is best to just trust the process and know when enough is enough – which can be difficult when you are always analysing what you do."

My current creative energy is dedicated to my '*LOVE*' series, launched in February 2024. Through this collection, I aim to celebrate the delightful and rich palette of life, weaving together the elements of love, flowers and balloons in a harmonious way. These create such a unique image when completed, due to their different feel and textures. My eye is already starting to look for the next inspiration, as is always the case when I start any series. It is just a question of finding the time to draw everything I want to capture on my paper."

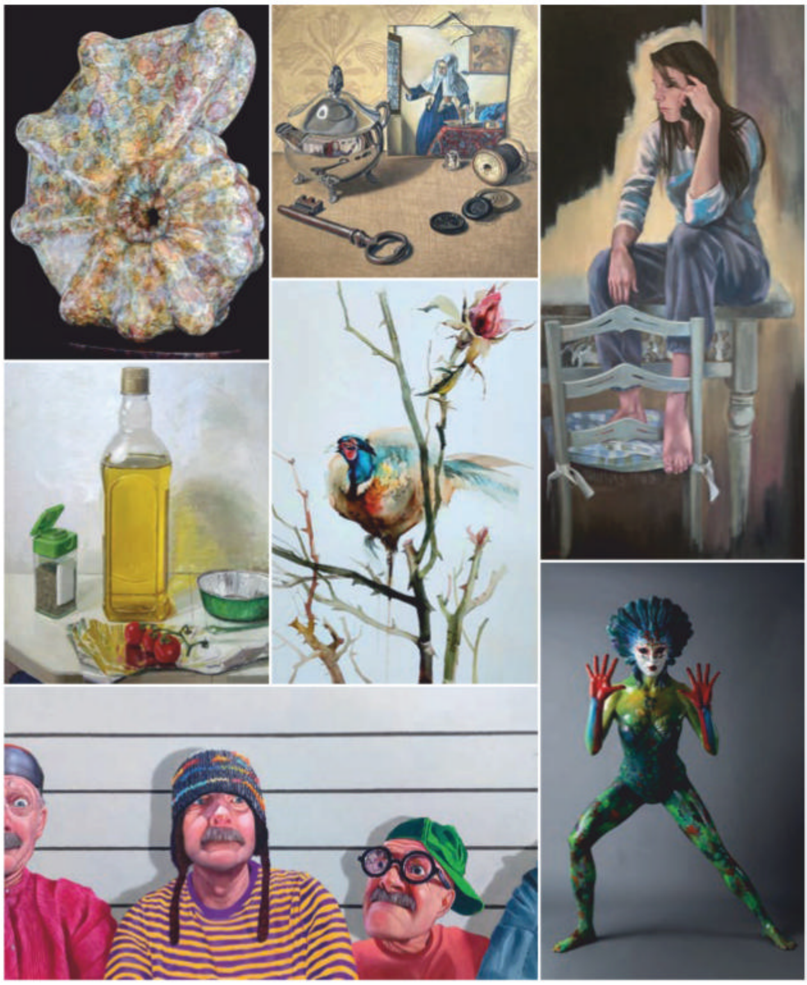
Instagram: @Fine-Art-By-Sun
YouTube: FineArtBySun ◻



***Unforgettable Beauty*, coloured pencil on watercolour paper, 51x76cm**



***Hopeful Beauty*, coloured pencil on watercolour paper, 51x76cm**



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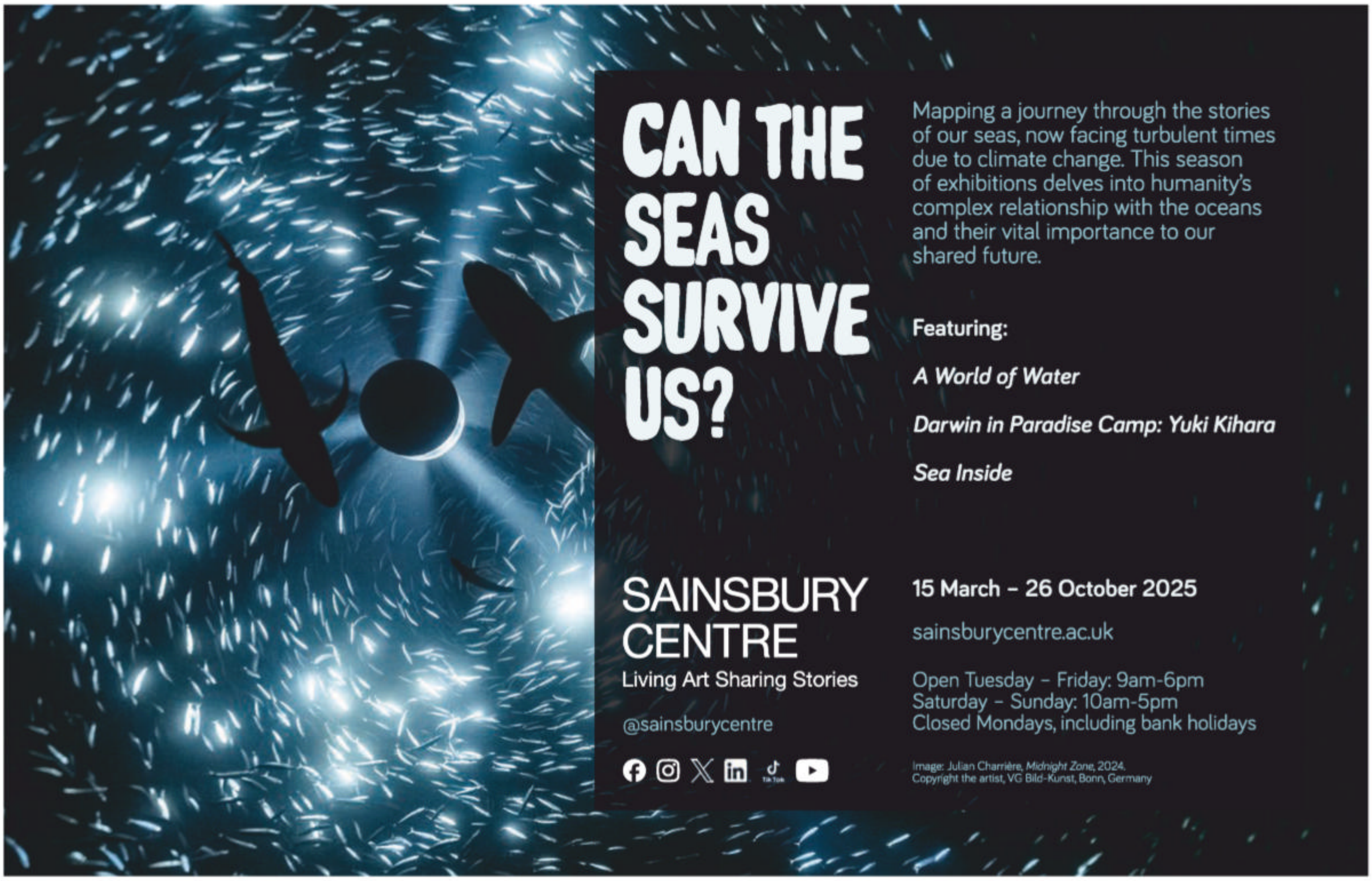

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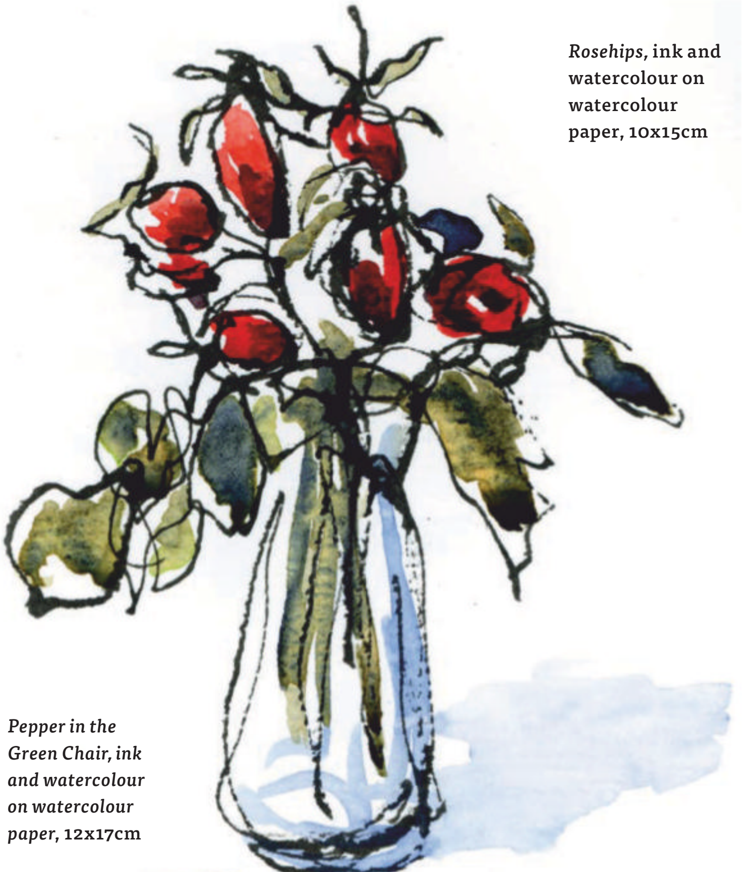
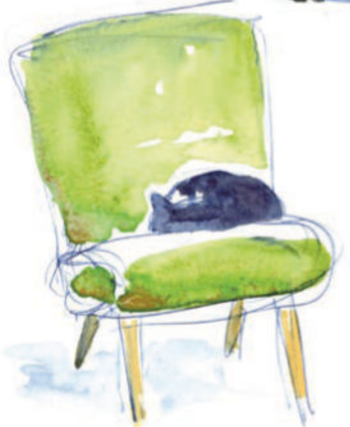
HOW I MAKE IT WORK

Eva-Lena Nordqvist

This Swedish artist has to fit her art around her day job. She explains how her stubborn, daily art practice makes that possible



***Rosehips*, ink and watercolour on watercolour paper, 10x15cm**



***Pepper in the Green Chair*, ink and watercolour on watercolour paper, 12x17cm**

I have a day job that has nothing to do with art and I don't depend on art for my living. I've always loved drawing and painting but, odd as it seems to me now, there were a few years when I thought there was no use in painting – that I couldn't justify spending time on it. I still wanted to paint and brought my colours and brushes on vacation, but often found myself packing them away again, unused, in my suitcase at the end of summer. Then, in 2020, I decided to paint something every day for four weeks and post it on Instagram for accountability. I wanted to keep it a low-pressure challenge – it was my vacation, after all – and gave myself permission to paint just a square of one colour, if nothing came to mind. But something always did. After those four summer weeks, I went on making art daily and it provided me with something I otherwise felt I lacked.

I grew up in Värmland in the west of Sweden. It's a landscape full of forests and lakes, blues and greens. The view over the hills looks different every day and this is what I'm striving to capture. I enjoy sketching the daily pleasures of life, be it a walk in the forest, a lemon tartlet in the intermission at the opera or a pot of evening tea at home.

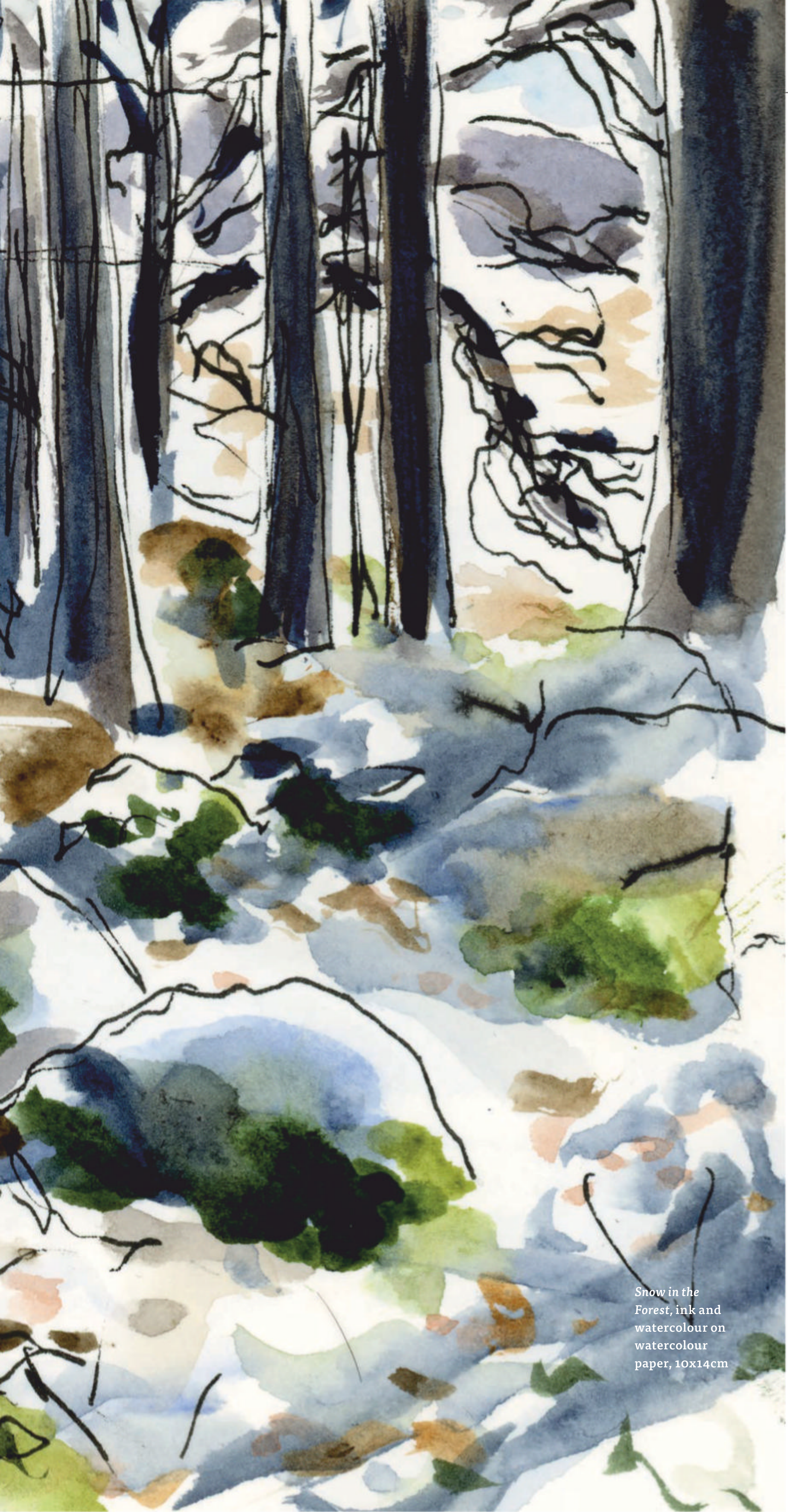
Early on, I decided not to be precious about my art. When I make something quickly, I can afford to experiment with it and act on ideas, rather than being afraid of spoiling something I've painstakingly created. I'd much rather try and fail, than not try and keep wondering.

When I started sketching with ink and watercolour, I didn't have waterproof ink. I used to leave a lot of white in my sketches, so as not to smudge the ink lines and muddy the watercolour, and found that I liked the effect. Nowadays I mostly use waterproof ink, but sometimes I like to use the effect of smudged ink.

I sketch from life and generally draw something close at hand. Lots of teapots – I like the shape and the promise of calm and warmth. My studio is wherever I am, with my little kit of a watercolour sketchbook, a fountain pen, a waterbrush pen and tiny watercolour palette. I own lots of watercolour tubes and beautiful brushes, but even at home, I often use these things and paint at the kitchen table or in an armchair. I'd love to have a proper studio at some point, and above all the time to spend in it.

It makes me really happy when somebody says my posts inspire them to make art. That is what I would like to share: the joy of making art, even in a small amount of time, at my kitchen table on a Tuesday evening.

Instagram: @sommarigen □



Snow in the Forest, ink and watercolour on watercolour paper, 10x14cm

EVA'S TIPS FOR PAINTING EVERY DAY

1

You're doing it for your own sake, so the main thing is to keep doing it I post things that aren't perfect on Instagram: just post art every day and don't worry what people will think.

2

I like to sketch quickly, rather wildly, to catch something I can't reach with slow, careful pencil drawing Something is lost if I work for too long on a painting.

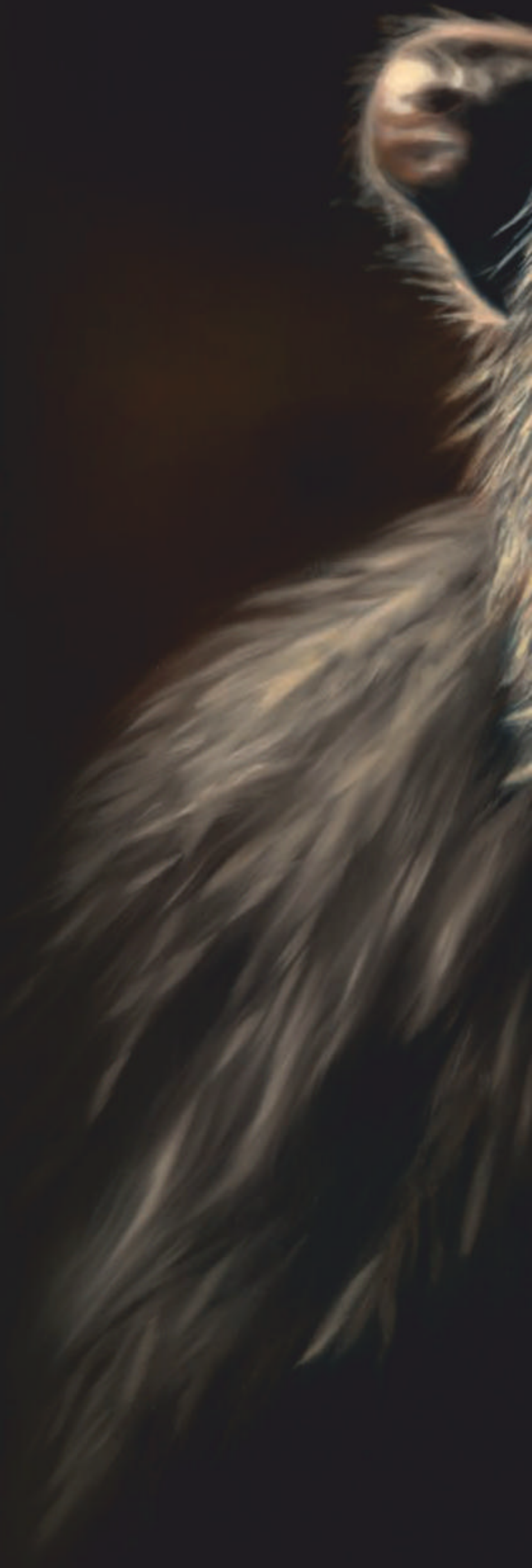
3

I almost always draw the lines first I've tried to do it the other way around but it inhibits my drawing. If I need to consider painted areas, I'm not as free and wild with my pen.

Sarah Eden

This artist captures the quiet dignity of life through poised, observational portraiture and place, *Ramsha Vistro* learns

If there's one thing Sarah Eden knows how to do, it's provide overlooked creatures with a moment in the spotlight. From quietly noble badgers to the much-maligned mouse, her oil paintings lift the everyday and the often-ignored, capturing wildlife with a realism that's both reverent and full of personality. Based in rural Wiltshire, Sarah paints what she sees, from curious hares and elusive foxes to bees and birds mid-flight. After a detour into the world of sales with a language degree, Sarah returned to her true calling: art. Over the last decade, she has built a career on pet portraiture, with commissions from as far afield as Milan and Tasmania, but her focus has now shifted towards her own collections. She talks about artistic pivots, painting with purpose and why a touch of looseness isn't such a bad thing.
sarahedenportraits.co.uk ▶



Reflection**, oil on board, 61x61cm**

Eden

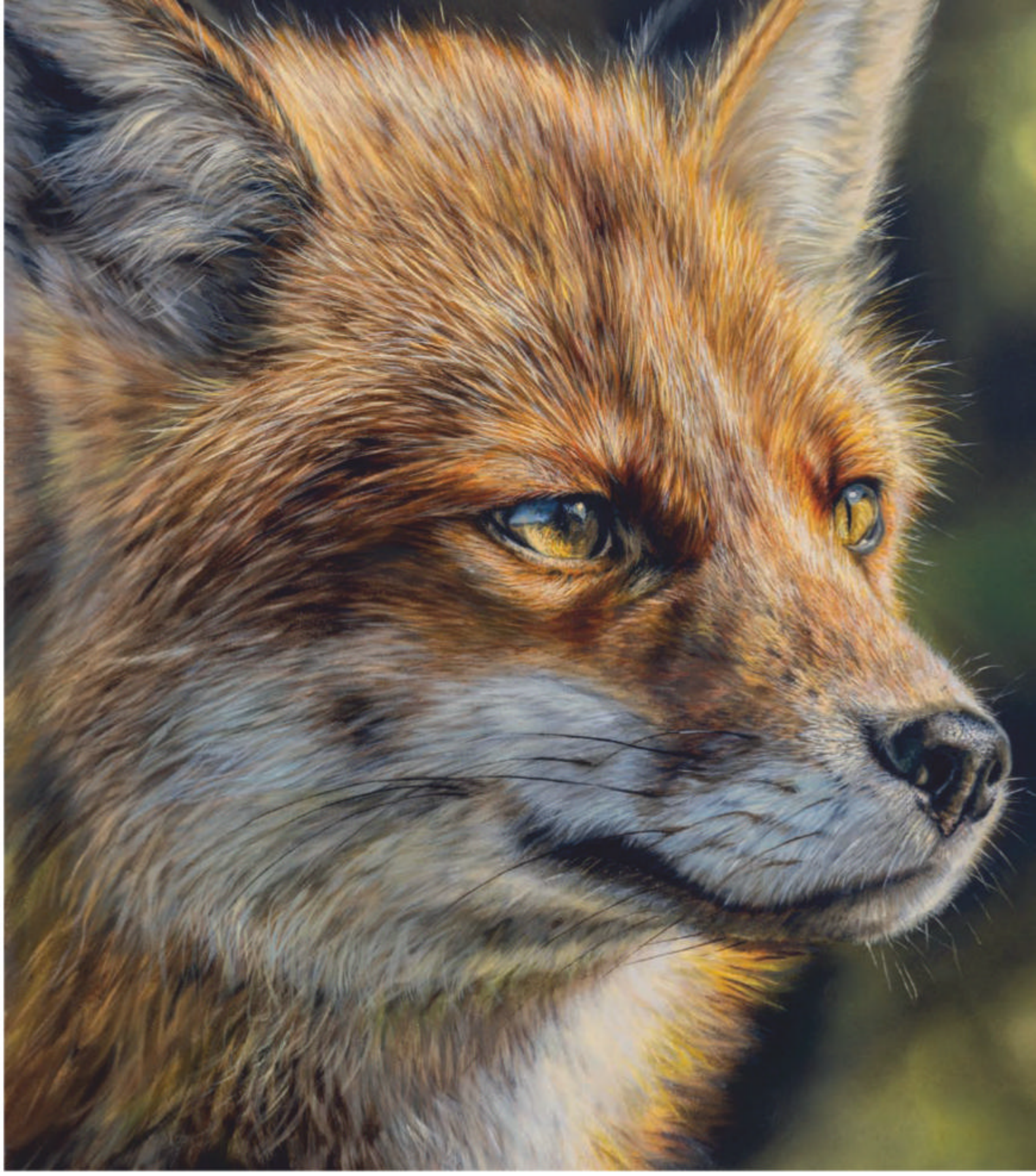
I was a very outdoorsy child.
Times were different and I would rarely be back in the house before dark. I loved exploring the woods close to our house and spotting the wildlife there. My godparents used to take me to a place we called the 'magic woods,' where I would build dens with my brother and sister. I've always been fascinated by nature and our native wildlife.

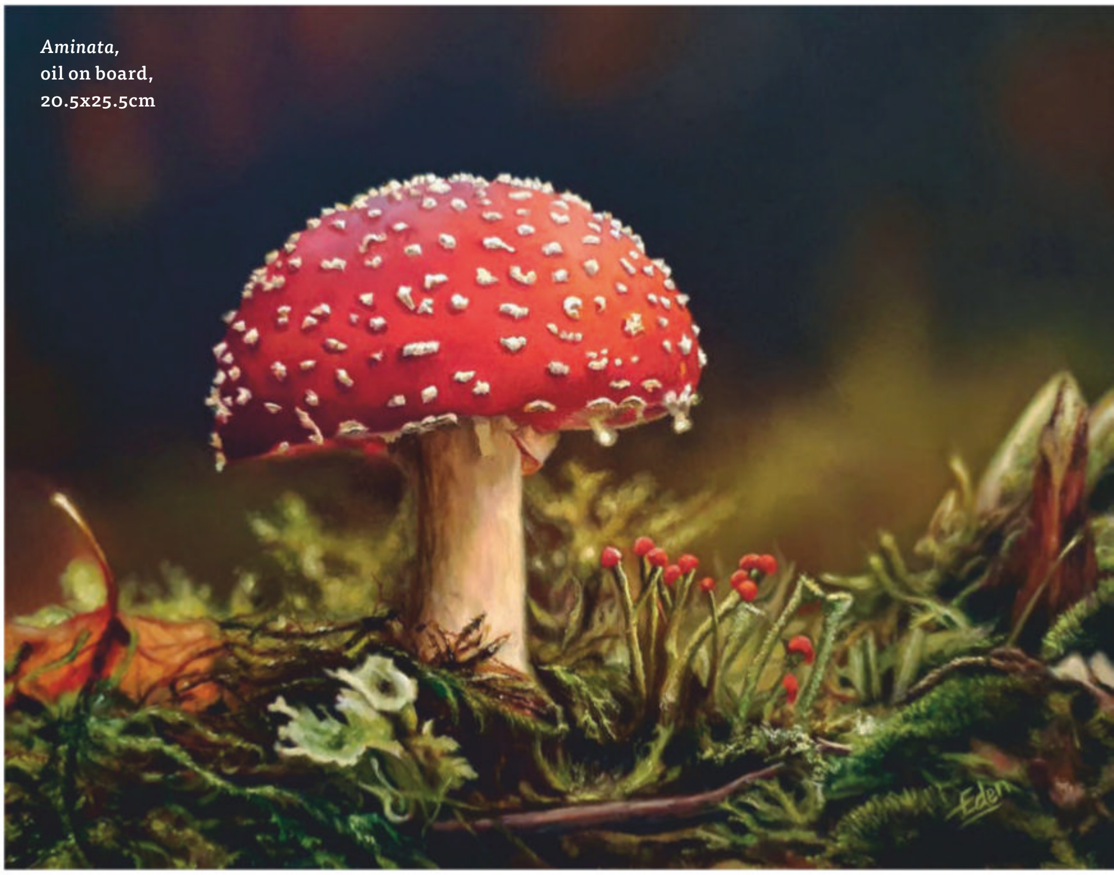
I always wanted to paint.
I realised at school that art was definitely in my blood. However, my head ruled my heart when it came to further education, and I opted for a less risky future. I completed a degree in French Literature and initially pursued various French-speaking roles within sales and marketing. However, it quickly became clear I was a square peg in a round hole and before long, I found my way back to my true passion: art. Thankfully, with a very supportive family, I took the plunge into art around 10 years ago and can honestly say I haven't looked back.

I am entirely self-taught.
I have immersed myself in the teachings of many oil painters through books and online method and technique tutorials. I am constantly learning and evolving as an artist, and believe I always will. My work has actually begun to loosen slightly and I'm really embracing it.

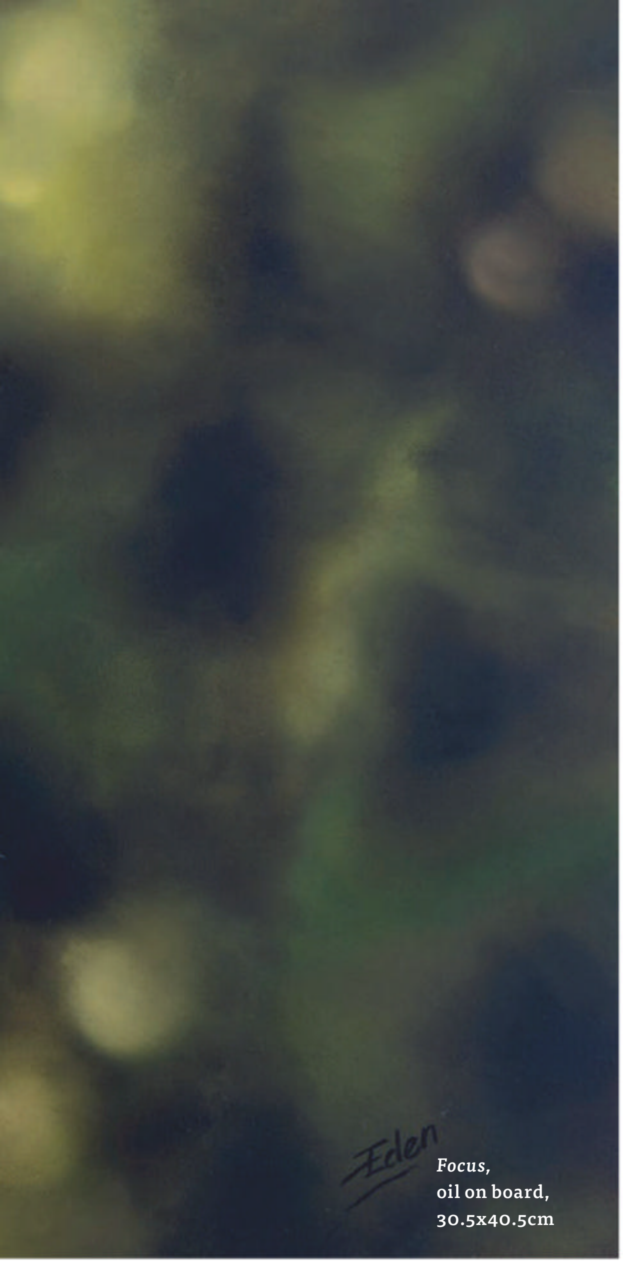
I have a mad passion for all animals.
My oil paintings are dedicated to celebrating the beauty of the animal world – especially the often-overlooked creatures. I'm passionate about bringing these animals into the spotlight, revealing their unique personalities to help others appreciate the joy they bring. Animals like badgers, mice and squirrels are sometimes dismissed as pests but, through my work, I hope to change that perception and invite people to see them as the remarkable little beings I know them to be.

I am fortunate to be surrounded by the rich and diverse wildlife of the British countryside.
The rolling fields, ancient woodlands and winding hedgerows offer a constant source of inspiration, filled with creatures which are an integral part of this landscape. Being so close to nature has deeply shaped my work – it's where my love for portraying native animals first took root. I'm lucky enough to spot all manner of animals on my daily dog walks and, through my paintings, I aim to reflect the intimate connection I feel to my surroundings and share the quiet magic of the creatures which call this landscape home.

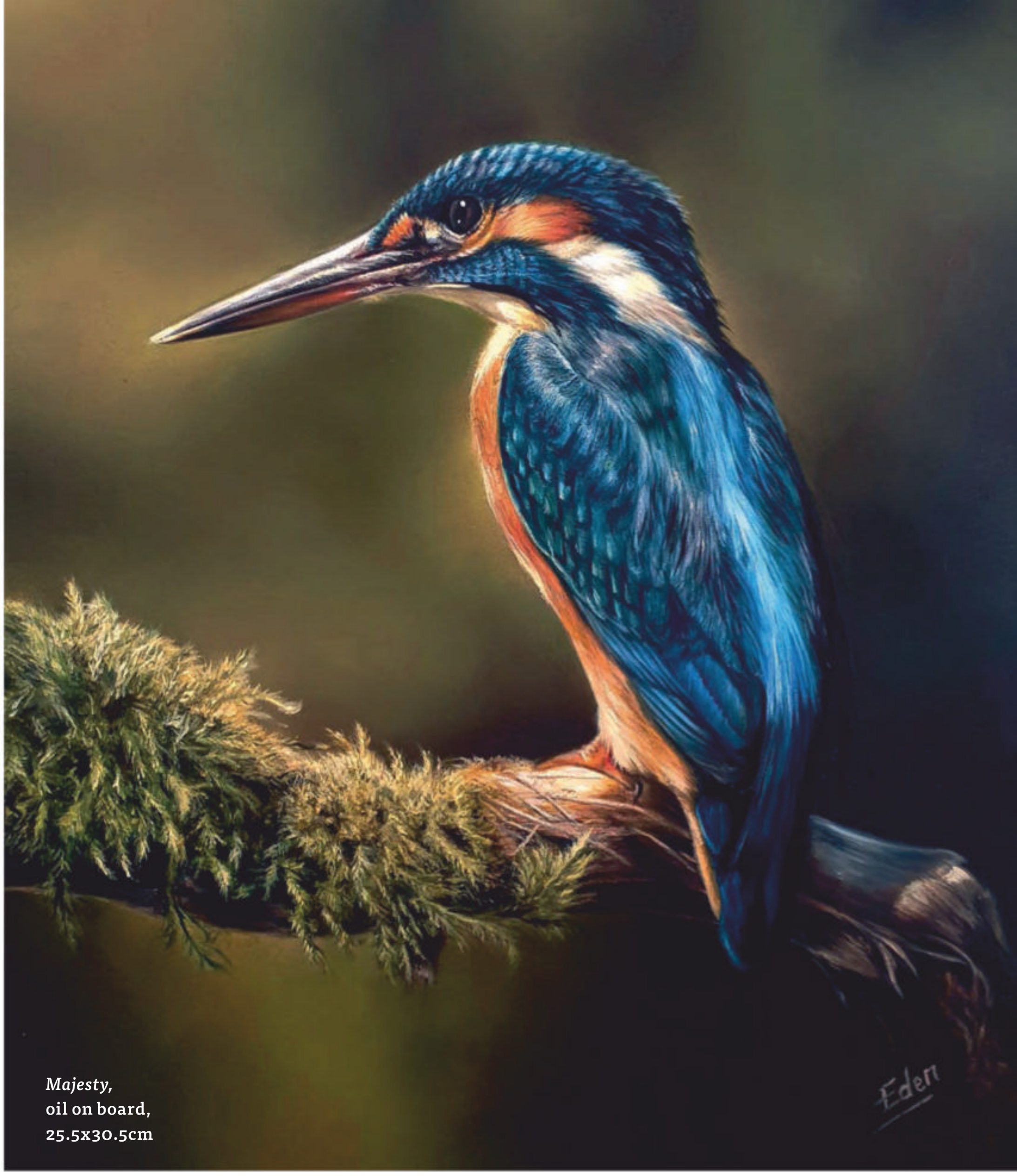




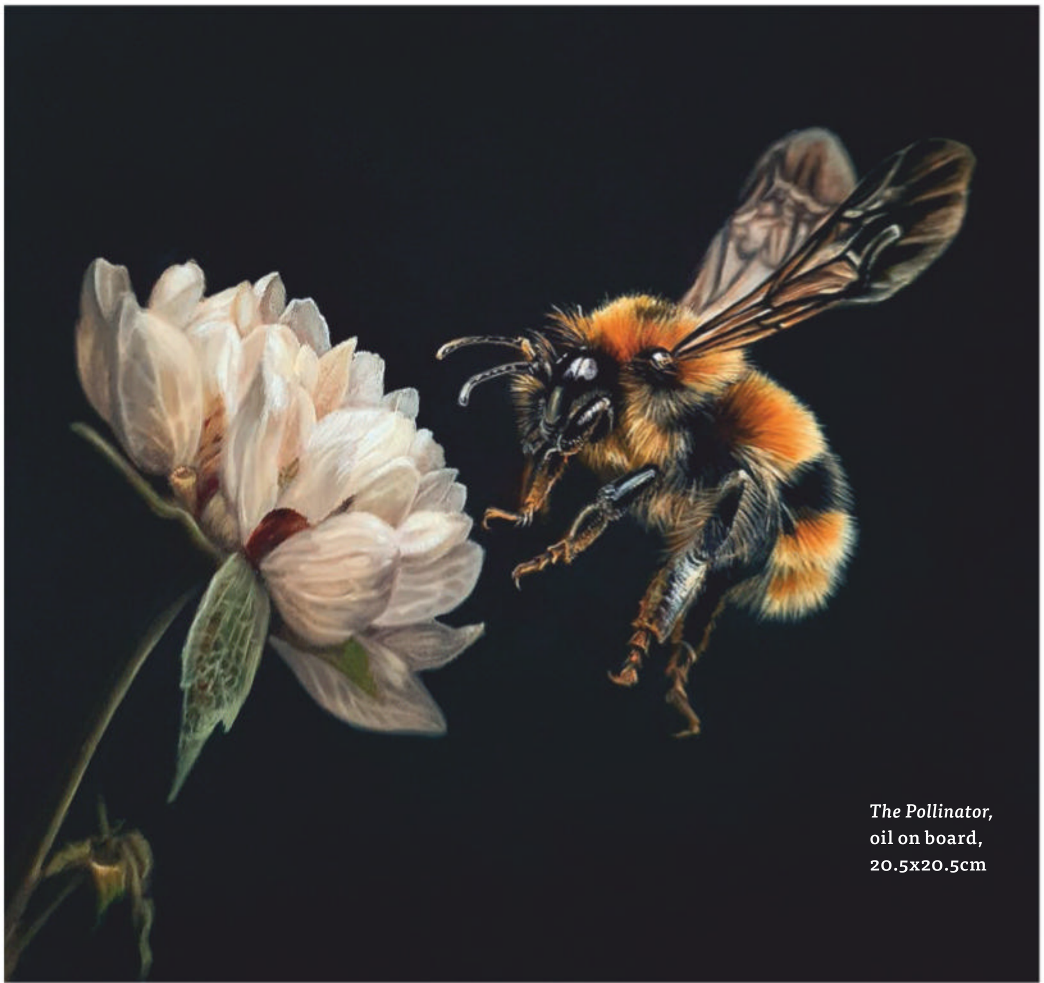
Aminata,
oil on board,
20.5x25.5cm



Focus,
oil on board,
30.5x40.5cm



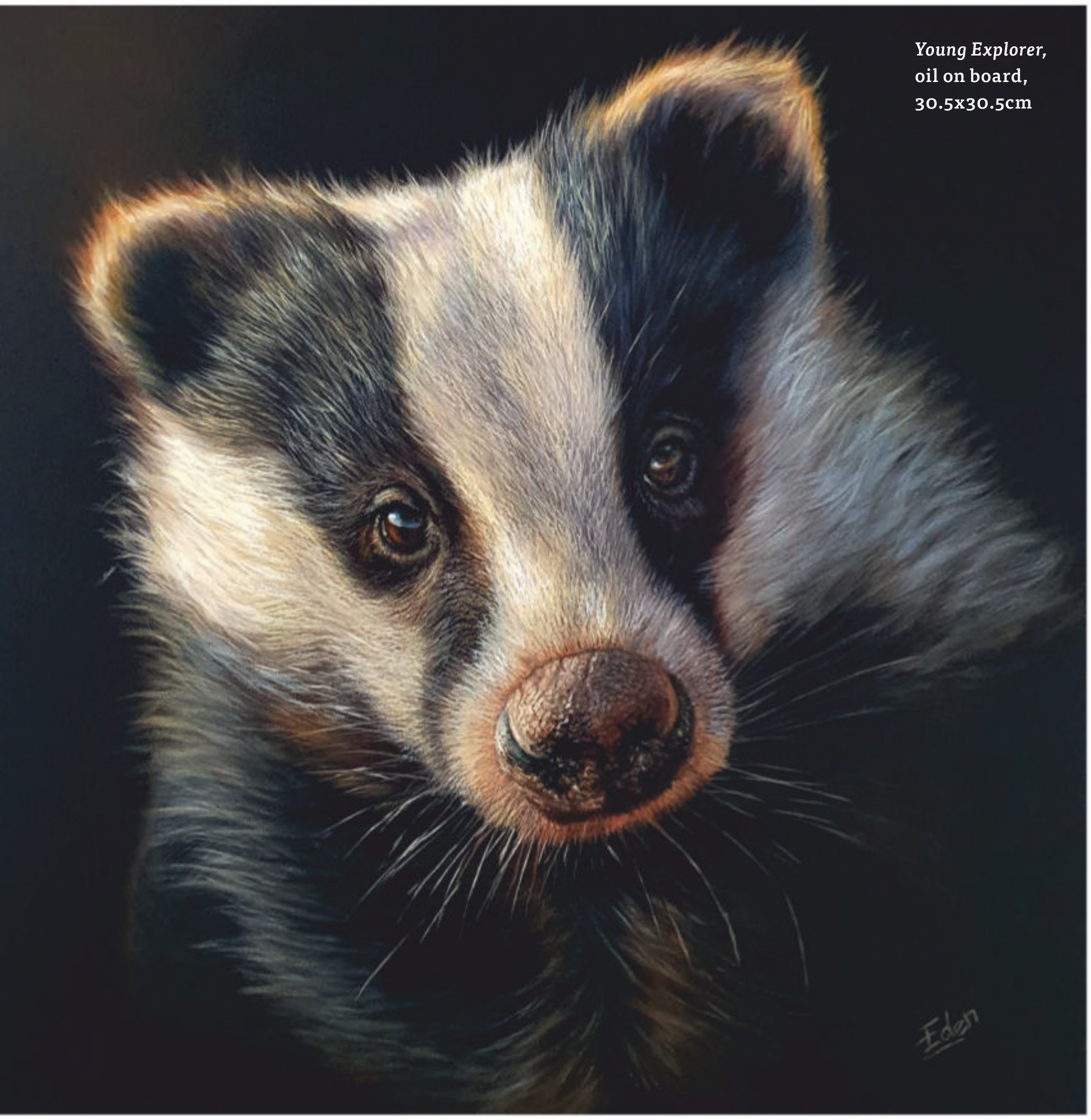
Majesty,
oil on board,
25.5x30.5cm



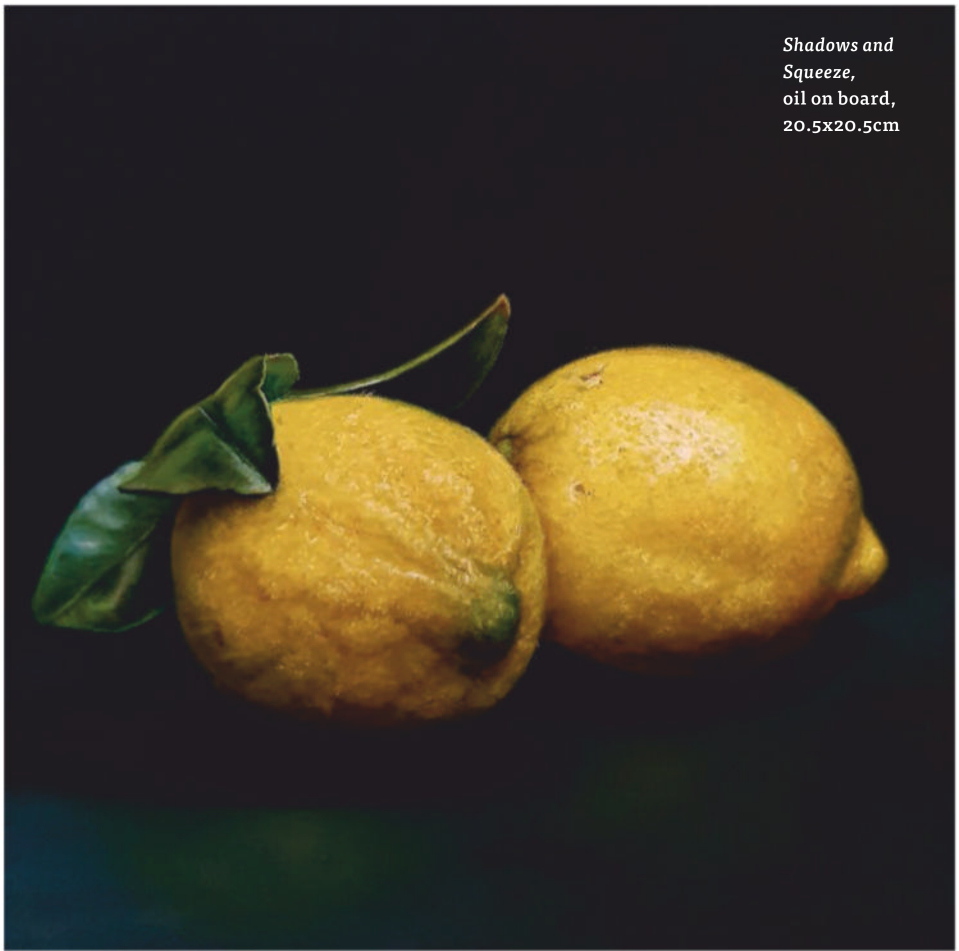
The Pollinator,
oil on board,
20.5x20.5cm

For the first years of my art career, commissions were my mainstay. With a deep passion for animals, it was a natural step to begin with pet portraiture. Every commission has been wonderfully varied and I've found real joy in building a connection, not only with each animal but also in carefully interpreting each commissioner's vision with sensitivity and respect. Now, however, I'm beginning to step away from commissioned work, choosing instead to focus on developing my own collections. This shift allows me the freedom to fully explore and express the subjects I feel most passionately about.

My preferred style of painting is rooted in realistic representation. While my work is highly detailed, what matters most to me is capturing a true sense of form and reality. I'm always striving to move beyond a two-dimensional, illustrative approach, instead aiming to convey subjects with genuine shape, weight and solidity. I'm fascinated by the way light interacts with form and how it helps to define structure and depth. To achieve this, I use a careful ▶



Young Explorer, oil on board, 30.5x30.5cm



Shadows and Squeeze, oil on board, 20.5x20.5cm

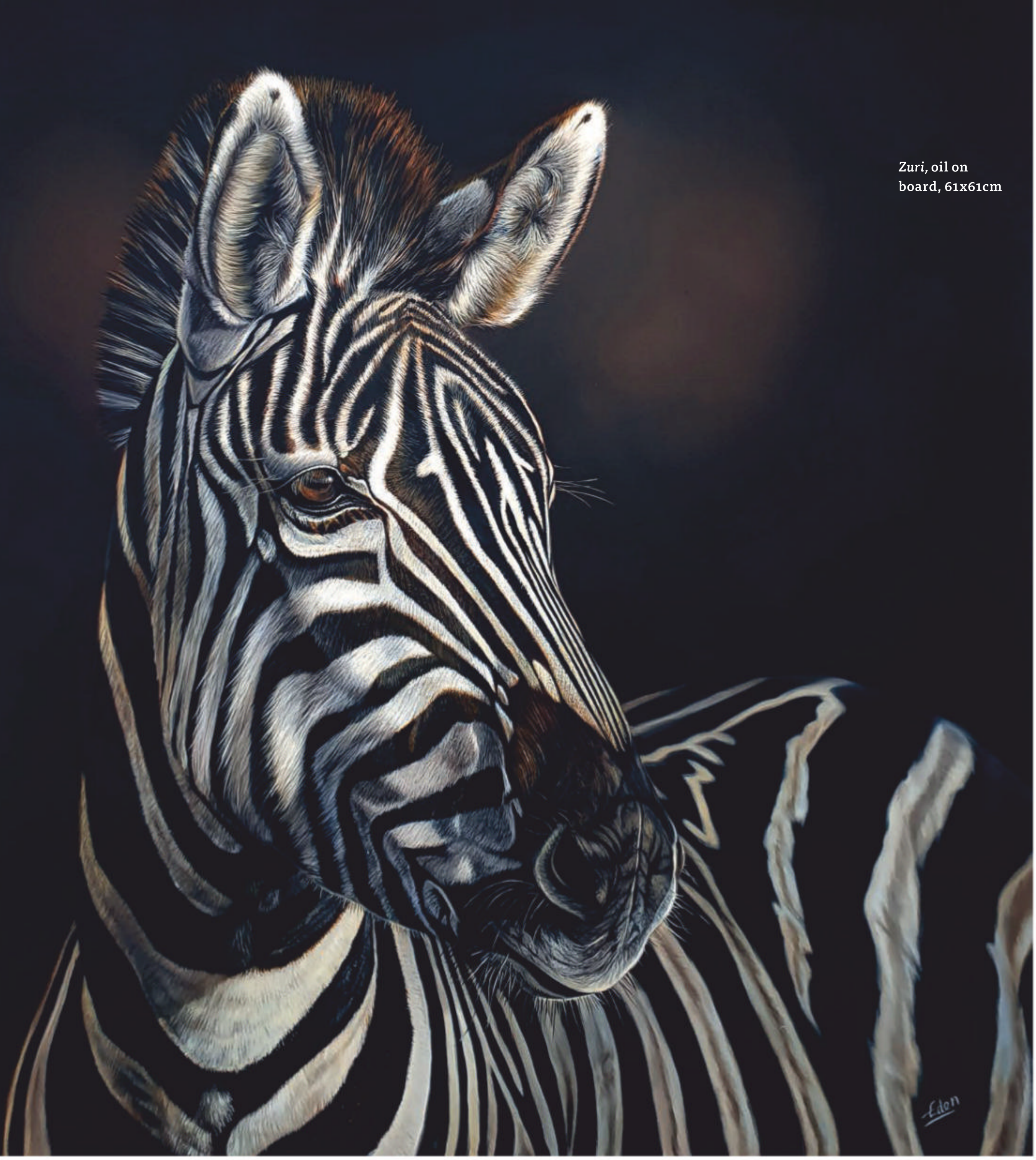
layering of paint, working from dark to light, in a process that feels almost sculptural, gradually building a sense of volume within the piece.

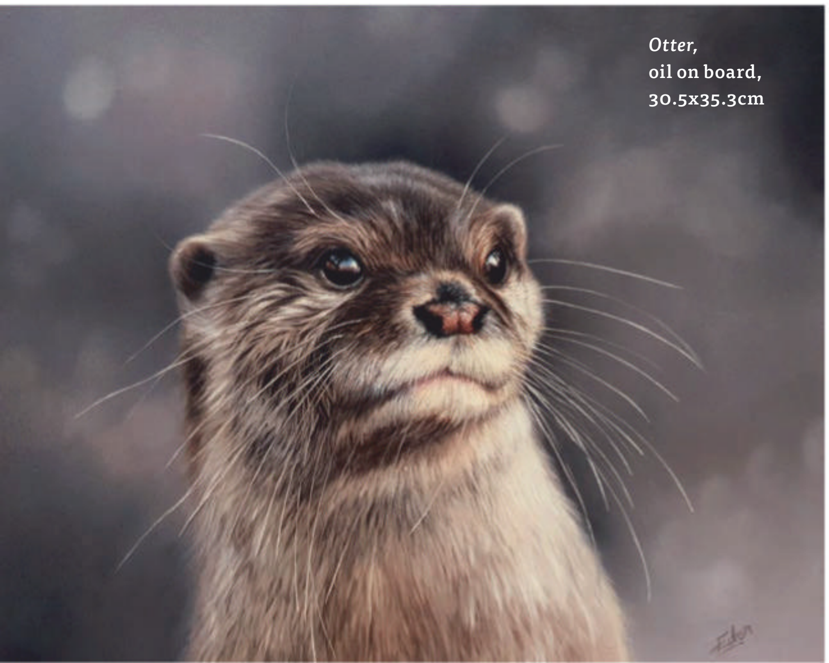
I am deeply inspired by the techniques of the Old Masters.
Especially Caravaggio and his mastery of *chiaroscuro*. I love the dramatic contrasts of light and shadow this technique offers, particularly in my still life paintings, where it allows me to create atmosphere, intensity and a heightened sense of realism. I'm a slave to detail, and it's easy for me to become absorbed in the smaller elements of a painting rather than the composition as a whole. To counter this, I regularly step back – often viewing my work from a distance or even through a mirror – which helps me see it as a unified composition rather than a collection of individual details.

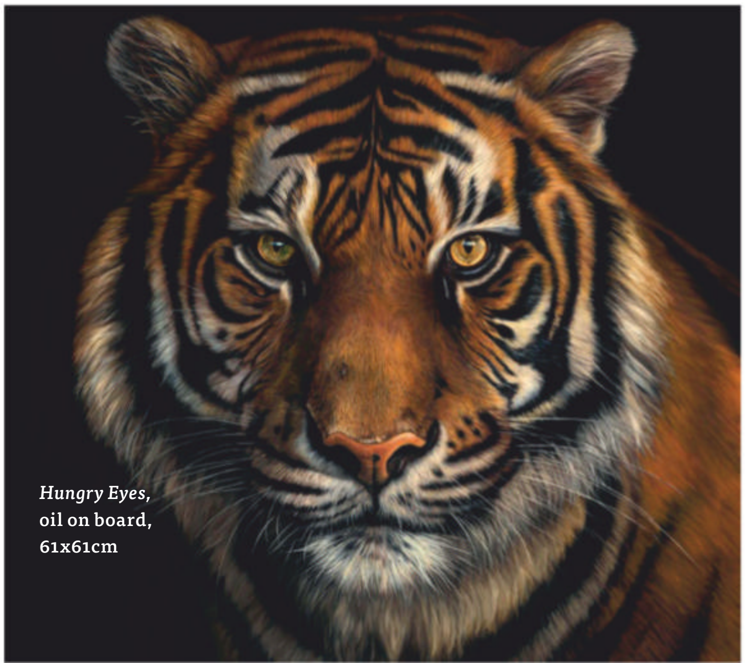
Behind the scenes, I often create quick 'sketches' in oil paint.
I restrict myself to using large brushes. This approach forces me to focus on the overall shape, form and flow of the subject, rather than getting caught up in fine detail – even if these studies aren't something I tend to share on social media.

I mainly paint onto MDF board that I generously coat with gesso.
I then sand it back to a very fine texture. I find the board really retains the vibrancy of the paint. I work in layers, typically from a monochrome underpainting in an earthy colour such as Burnt Umber, and then work my upper layers over the top, building from dark to light, leaving the highlights until the end. Depending on size and the level of detail involved, a painting can take me anywhere from a few days to a few months. I strive to create a sense of drama and emotional resonance, inviting the viewer to appreciate the simple pleasures of life.

My studio is a separate brick-built annexe to my home.
It features a partially vaulted ceiling with roof lights and windows so it's always beautifully flooded with natural light. It was purpose-built to avoid direct sunlight, helping to create the ideal conditions for painting. I often move my easel throughout the space depending on how bright the day is and I have a handy little painting trolley on wheels which makes it easy to reposition myself as needed. Part of the studio is also set up as a gallery space, allowing clients to view available works in person. I'm incredibly fortunate to be one of those people who wake up on a Monday morning genuinely excited for the week of work ahead. I feel truly blessed to make living doing something I absolutely love. □

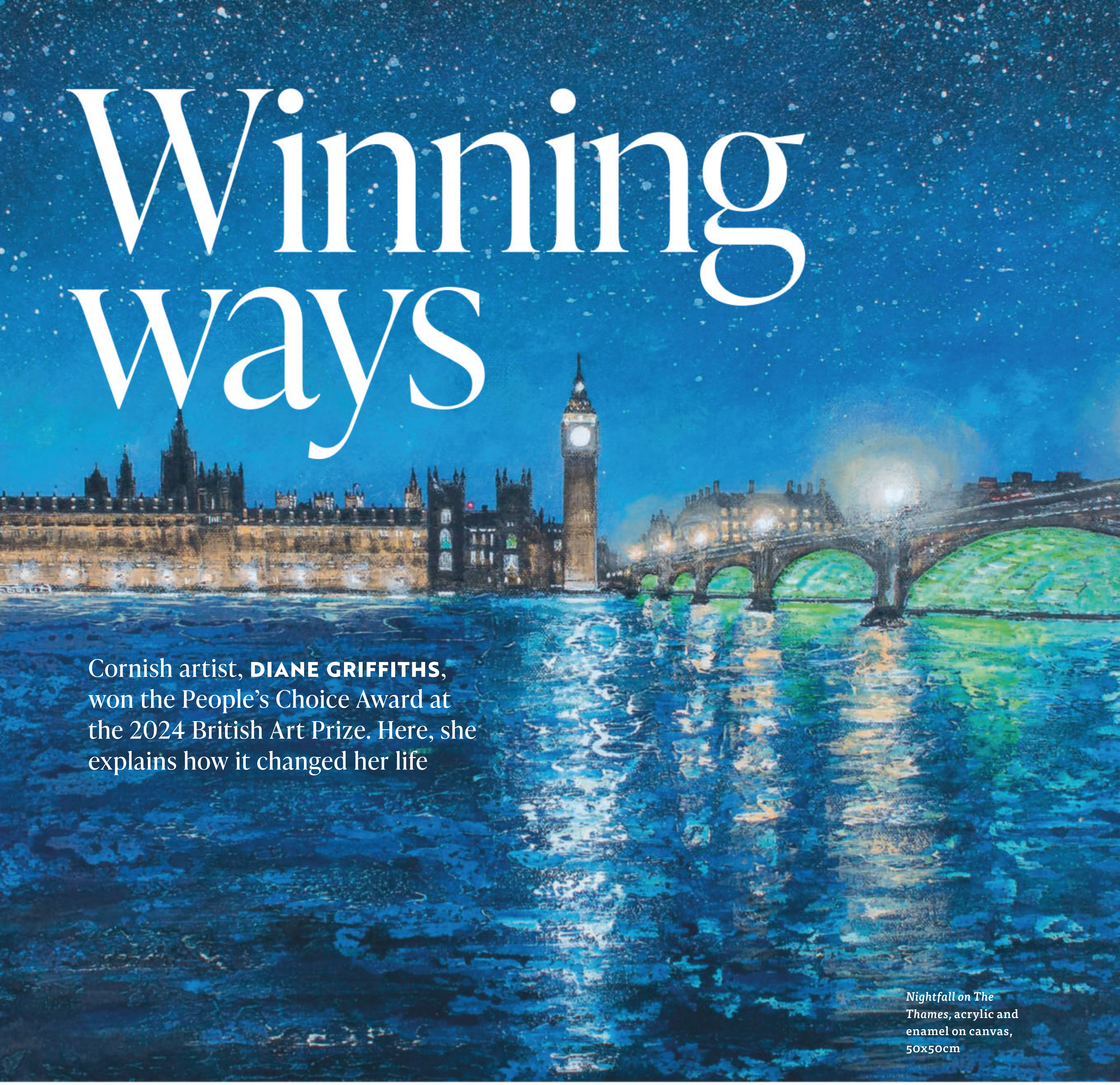

Zuri, oil on board, 61x61cm


Otter, oil on board, 30.5x35.3cm


Hungry Eyes, oil on board, 61x61cm

Winning ways

Cornish artist, **DIANE GRIFFITHS**, won the People's Choice Award at the 2024 British Art Prize. Here, she explains how it changed her life

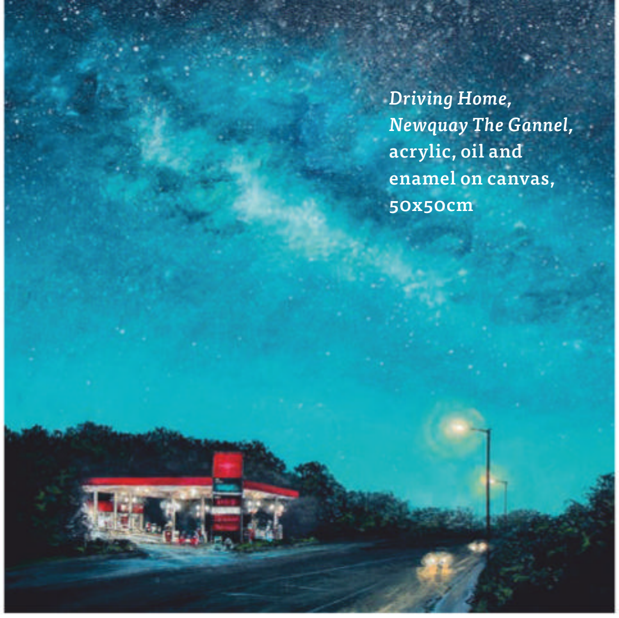


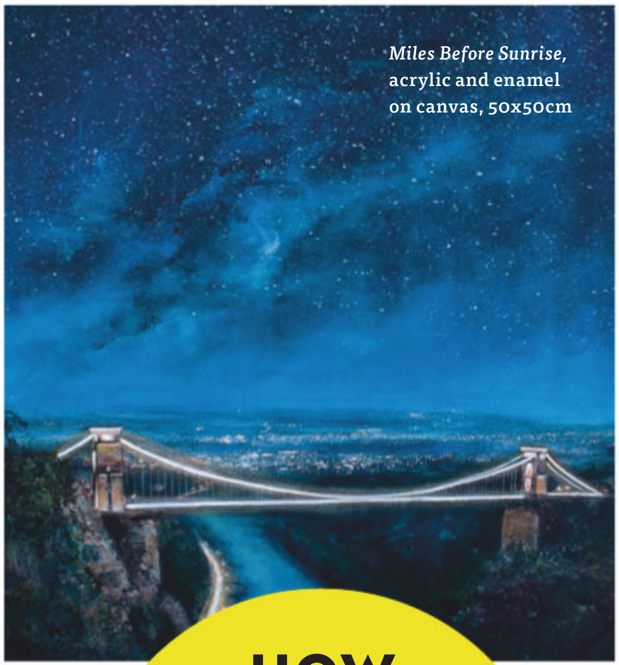
Nightfall on The Thames, acrylic and enamel on canvas, 50x50cm

AS AN ARTIST, IT'S DIFFICULT TO GET YOUR WORK OUT THERE. Competitions and open exhibitions are a great way to get involved and make new connections, and entering them is a key part of thinking outside the box and coming up with something innovative and original. I typically pick and choose which competitions I enter, because they aren't all created equally. But I've always been a fan of *Artists & Illustrators*: it carries a level of prestige that provides credibility and validation, which makes the British Art Prize very attractive to artists. In addition, what I really like about this competition is there are only 50 finalist artworks, so it creates an atmosphere which feels more personal, friendly and accessible.

My expectations for my submission were low! Art competitions are very popular and typically the judges have thousands of entries to look through. I remember thinking at the time, how on earth was I going to sell a painting of a petrol station if it got rejected? In the end I sold it to the garage, but I could have sold it ten times over with all the interest generated by the award.

It's tricky to define milestones as an artist, but achieving this award has impacted me beyond all my expectations. Little did I know what would happen when I hit the 'submit' button: I've had opportunities I used to only dream of – being part of a London exhibition, being featured in this magazine, being interviewed on BBC radio and asked to do workshops and talks. However, the real pinnacle has been how it has personally affected me as an artist. I have a new level of confidence in what I'm creating and my artistic direction, I'm not second guessing myself as much. I feel empowered to keep learning, evolving, experimenting and creating.


Driving Home, Newquay The Gannel, acrylic, oil and enamel on canvas, 50x50cm


Miles Before Sunrise, acrylic and enamel on canvas, 50x50cm

It's important to remember that entering competitions isn't just about winning; it's about pushing yourself, believing in your work enough to share it, and embracing every opportunity it offers, from the credibility and exposure gained, through to expanding your network and making new connections. And whether you win or not, every submission is proof that you're showing up for your art and for yourself. Keep creating, keep pushing, keep showing up. That's why I entered last year and why I'm entering again.

handonart.com

THE BRITISH ART PRIZE 2025

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Artists & Illustrators RAW UMBER studios

HOW TO ENTER

Visit
artistsandillustrators.co.uk/britishartprize2025
The entry fee is £22 for a first artwork and £18 for any additional artwork
Deadline for entries:
19 September 2025

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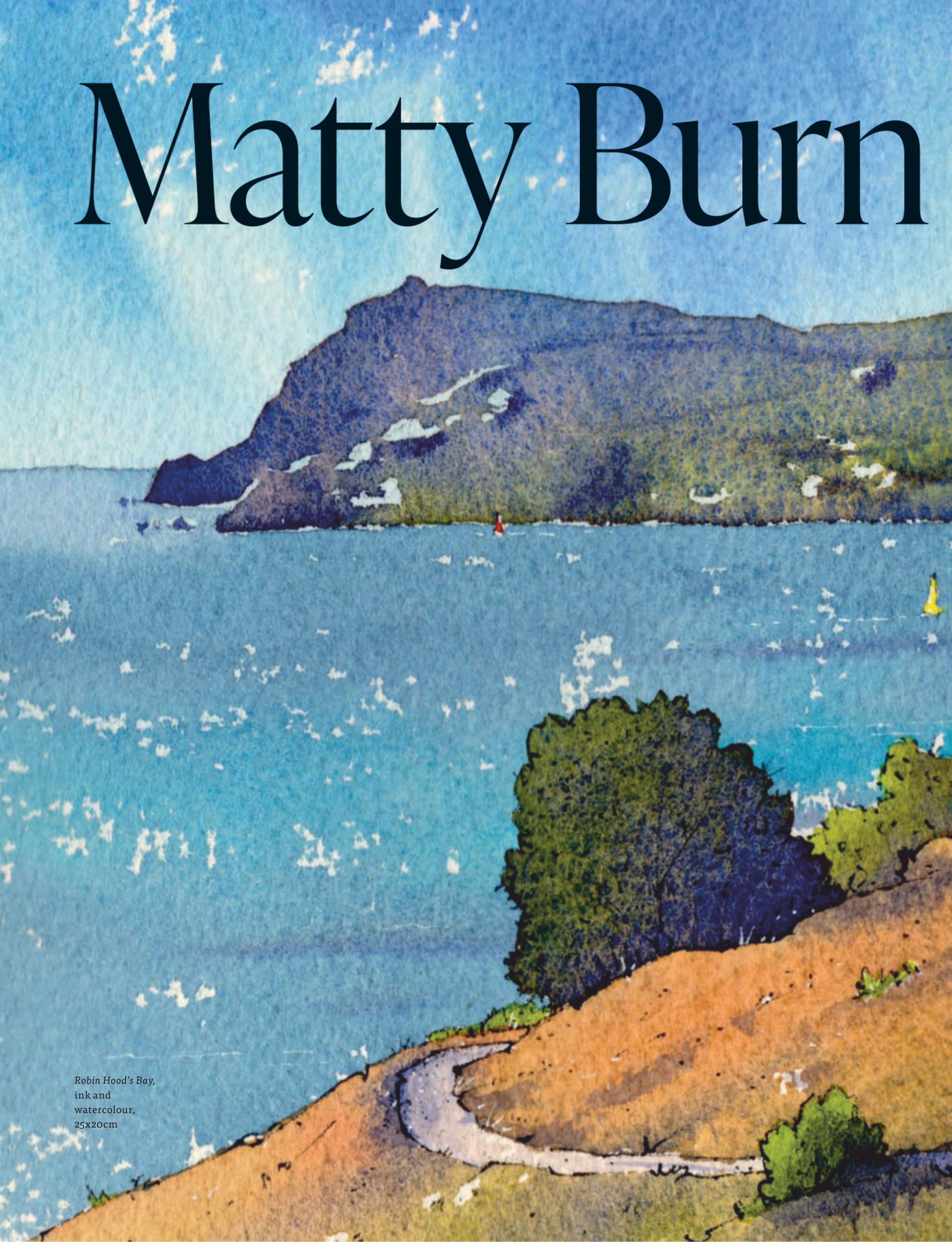
The annual British Art Prize, brought to you by *Artists & Illustrators* and Raw Umber Studios, continues to be one of the most major art competitions with international reach. It gives valuable exposure and recognition to artists and attracts thousands of quality entries from around the world. With cash prizes, exclusive art materials and an exhibition at gallery@oxo for the 50 finalists, from 26-30 November 2025, this year's competition also offers a once-in-a-lifetime first prize of a week-long solo exhibition at Panter & Hall, home to contemporary artists from across the globe.

Following the London exhibition, the January 2026 British Art Prize Winners' special issue of *Artists & Illustrators* will feature an exclusive 10-page editorial, with images of the shortlisted artworks and winners. The February 2026 issue will also showcase a standout six-page article about the People's Choice Award winner. These features offer unrivalled exposure for you and your work in the art world.

If you're not already in front of the easel, what are you waiting for? Endless fantastic opportunities await you, so start working on your entries today! ◻

SHUTTERSTOCK

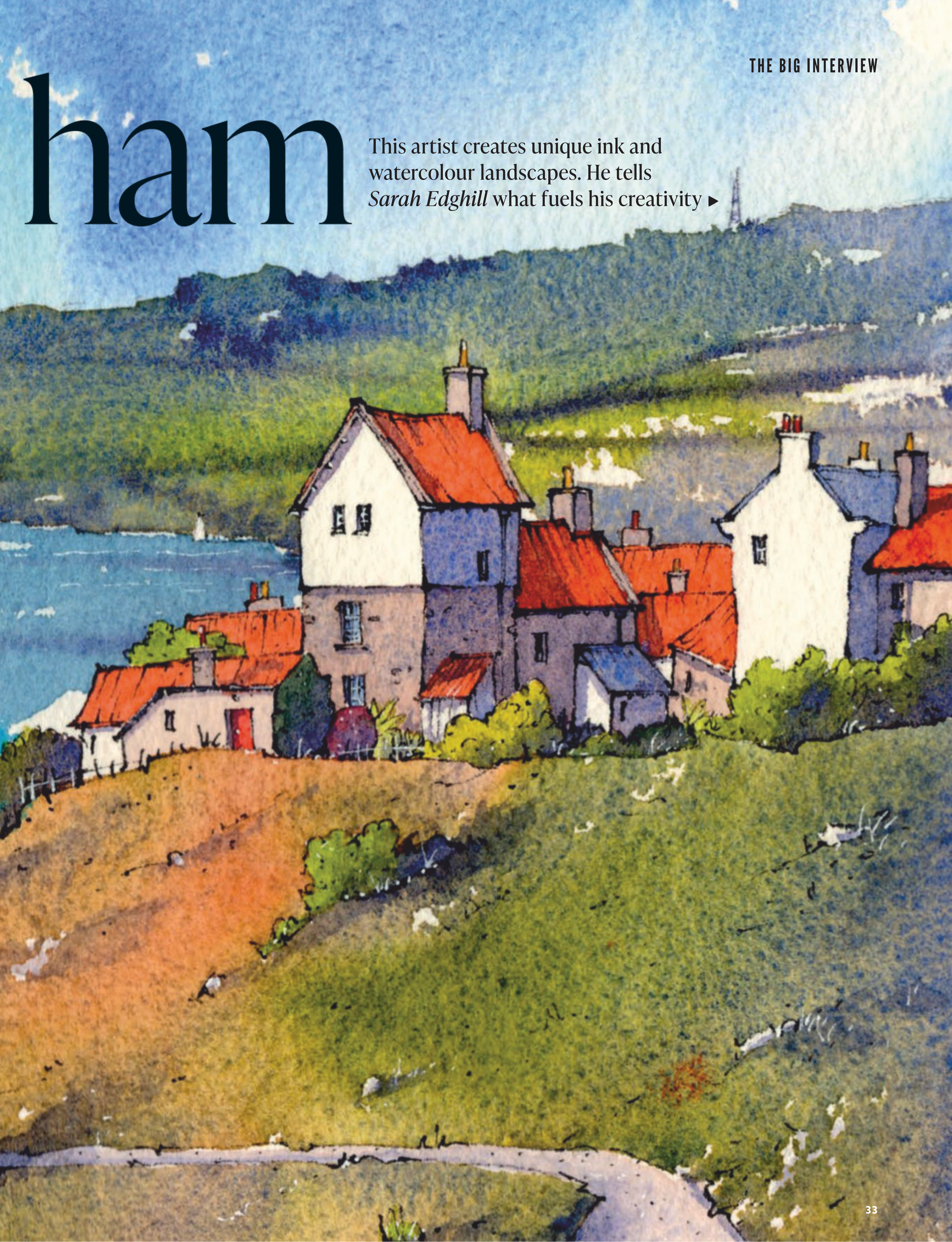
Matty Burn

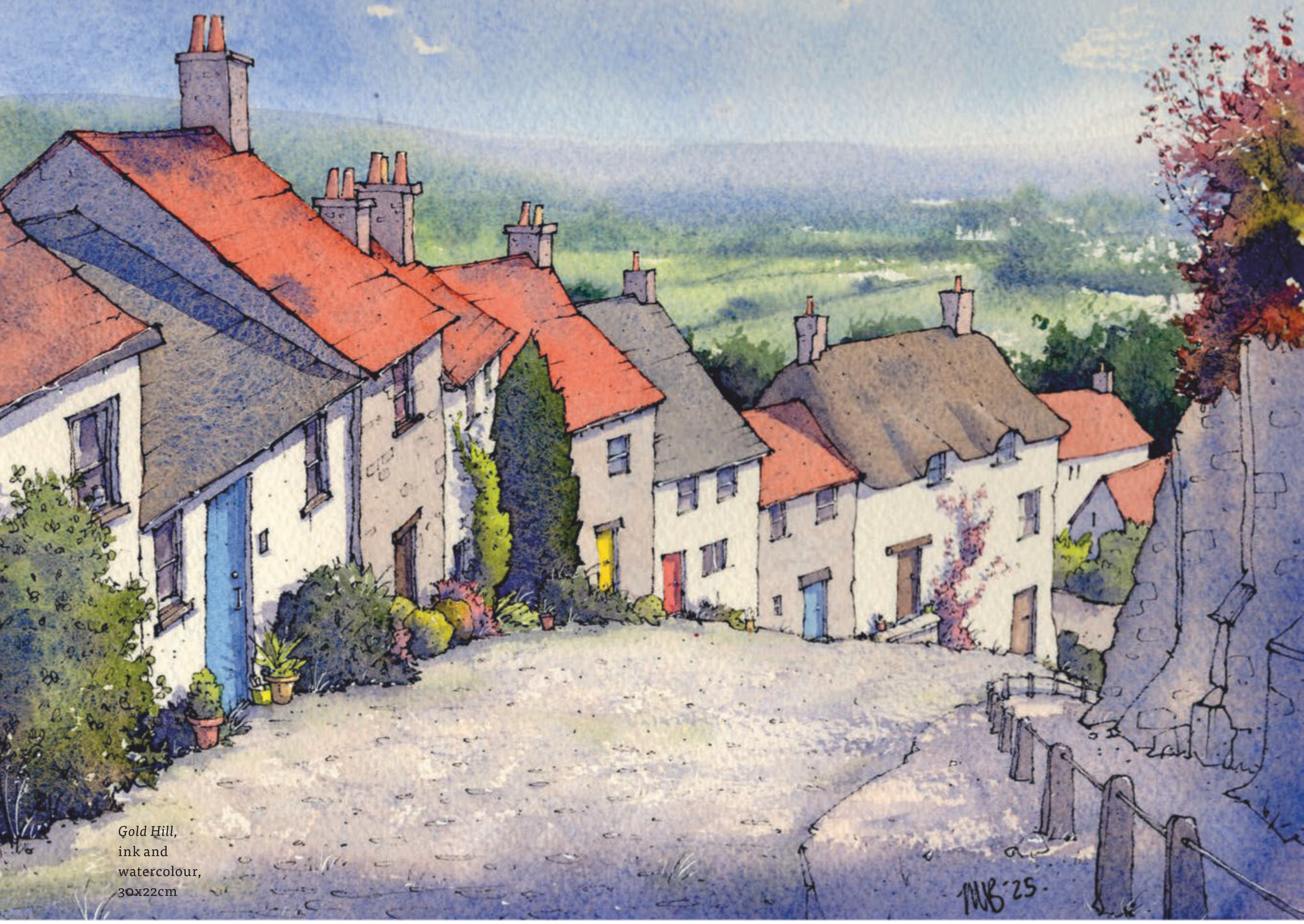


Robin Hood's Bay, ink and watercolour, 25x20cm

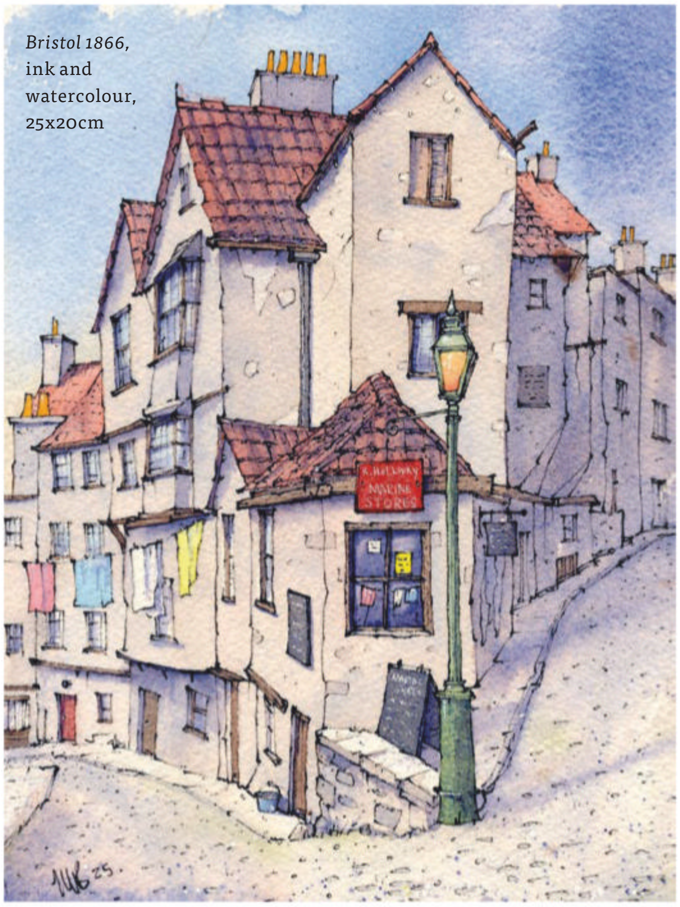
ham

This artist creates unique ink and watercolour landscapes. He tells *Sarah Edghill* what fuels his creativity ▶

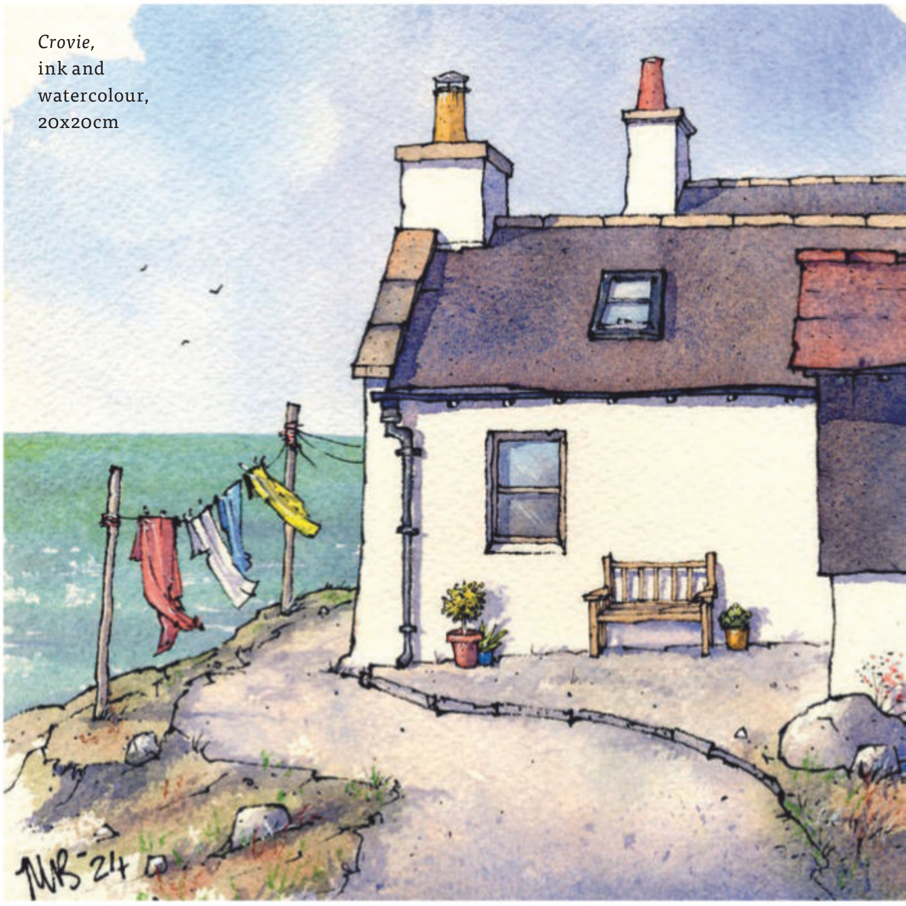




Gold Hill, ink and watercolour, 30x22cm


MARINE STORES
MB '25

Bristol 1866, ink and watercolour, 25x20cm



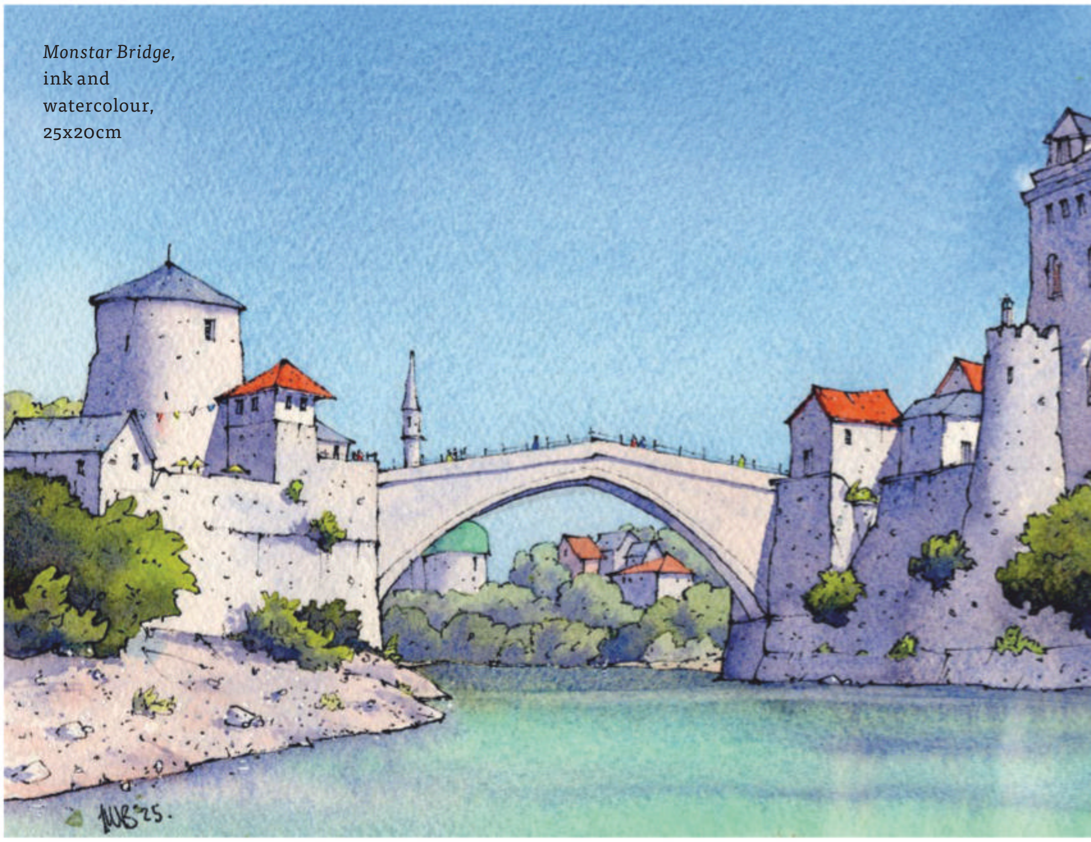
Crovie, ink and watercolour, 20x20cm

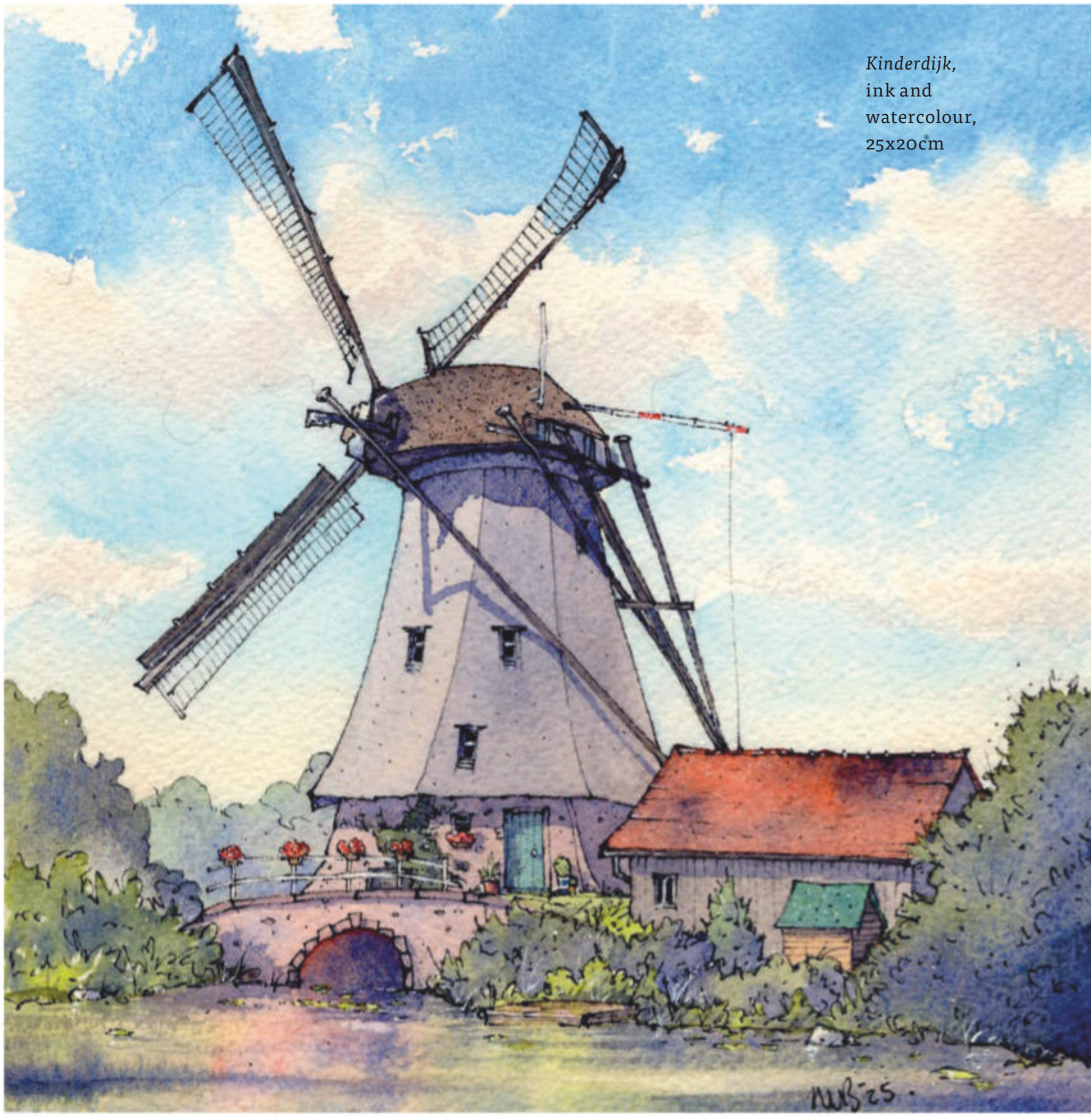
AFTER WORKING AS A MENTAL HEALTH NURSE, Matty Burnham took up art during lockdown and is now a successful ink and watercolour illustrator. He is inspired by the local landscapes near his home in Leeds and in the Yorkshire Dales where he grew up, but never sets out to replicate a landscape. Instead he aims to put his own mark on every scene he tackles, adding some details, omitting others and creating works which are as unique as his own handwriting.
mattyburnham.com

I have always been an excessive doodler. After work meetings, my notepad would be full of little cubes, boxes and house shapes, all drawn absent-mindedly. I still do it. If I have a pen, I genuinely cannot help but make marks on paper. During lockdown, I began learning watercolour as a hobby to pass the time while I had to stay home, but I had no idea art would become such an important part of my life. I never studied it formally, I watched YouTube tutorials and read 'how-to' watercolour books. I found the early stages of learning watercolour were quite conflicting; I enjoyed the processes and became interested in the different techniques. However, I also remember feeling frustrated that I was not able to recreate the visions in my mind on the paper. At that early stage, I simply didn't have the technical skills or knowledge to create these ideas to the standard I hoped for.

I have always found ink and watercolour to be a beautiful combination. I began adding ink to my work about six months after starting watercolour painting. I was hugely influenced by other ink and watercolour artists such as John Hoar and Peter Sheeler. As I continued to practise, my style developed and became more distinctive. I think of having an art 'style' as being a bit like handwriting: it's an inevitable result of repetition – I can try to tweak and neaten it, but it is hard to change. The ink is such a direct and effective way to convey the form of an object and the strength of watercolour is its vibrant, clean transparent washes. Over time, my ink work has been simplified to allow more room for the watercolour to breathe. I'm less concerned about accuracy and realism, and more about what is aesthetically pleasing to the human brain.

Art changed the way I viewed the landscapes around me. When out walking, I noticed atmospheric perspective which I had previously taken for granted. I found myself staring at clouds or ▶


Monstar Bridge, ink and watercolour, 25x20cm


Kinderdijk, ink and watercolour, 25x20cm

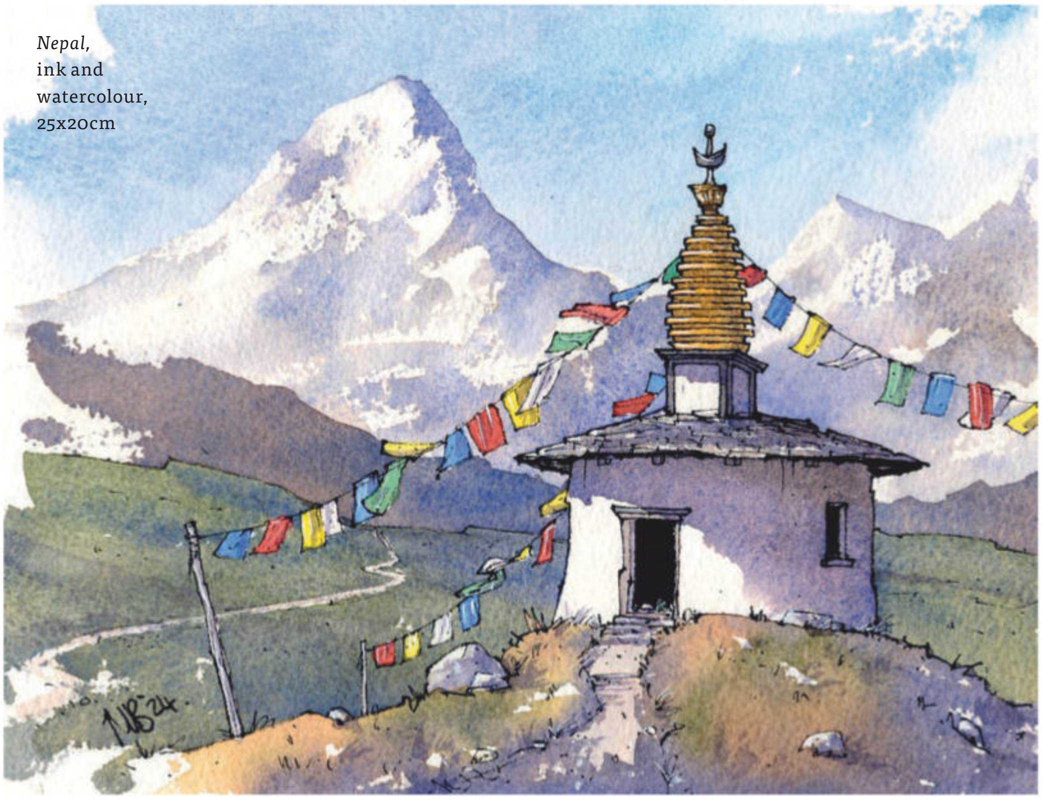
trees and wondering how I would go about painting them. In hindsight, getting to grips with drawing in perspective early on was extremely important. Understanding these principles allowed me to tackle complex scenes despite being a relatively new artist. For me, it's not about getting every single angle 100% perfect, but more about how the overall standard of the completed illustration improves when the rules of perspective are applied consistently.

It's nice to feel inspired by a variety of places.
I grew up in a small Cumbrian market town called Kirkby Stephen in the Yorkshire Dales National Park and I'm most happy in the countryside, which is why the majority of my work focuses on rural landscapes. Drawing and painting different landscapes raises different challenges. For example, how do I go about drawing the texture of a thatched roof? How do I approach painting reflections in water? These solutions ultimately become transferable to other areas and you end up better equipped to deal with new challenges when they arise in the future.

I like to work from a combination of photos and imagination.
I use the photo as a foundation, then move, omit and add components. I don't feel restricted to places I have visited because illustrating unfamiliar locations is a great way to learn about history and culture. I illustrate a lot of Canadian grain elevators even though I have no personal connection to them, aside from finding the structures fascinating and beautiful. When I share these illustrations, I receive stories from Canadians whose ancestors built and worked in these elevators. Each time I learn something new about the old way of life on the prairies.

I use a Fude fountain pen nib, a type of Japanese calligraphy pen.
The nib is bent at the tip allowing for variety in line weight, depending on the angle at which the pen is held. It's perfect for adding expressively into your drawings. I also draw on rough cotton paper, which gives the edge of the linework a slightly rougher, textured effect. To add character, I like my lines to contain kinks and imperfections but I don't want them to look scruffy. It feels intuitive and nuanced but, in reality, it has likely come from hours of repetition and practice.

I always attempt to improve the composition if I can.
When using a reference image, I will always make changes. Sometimes I make so many,


Nepal,
ink and
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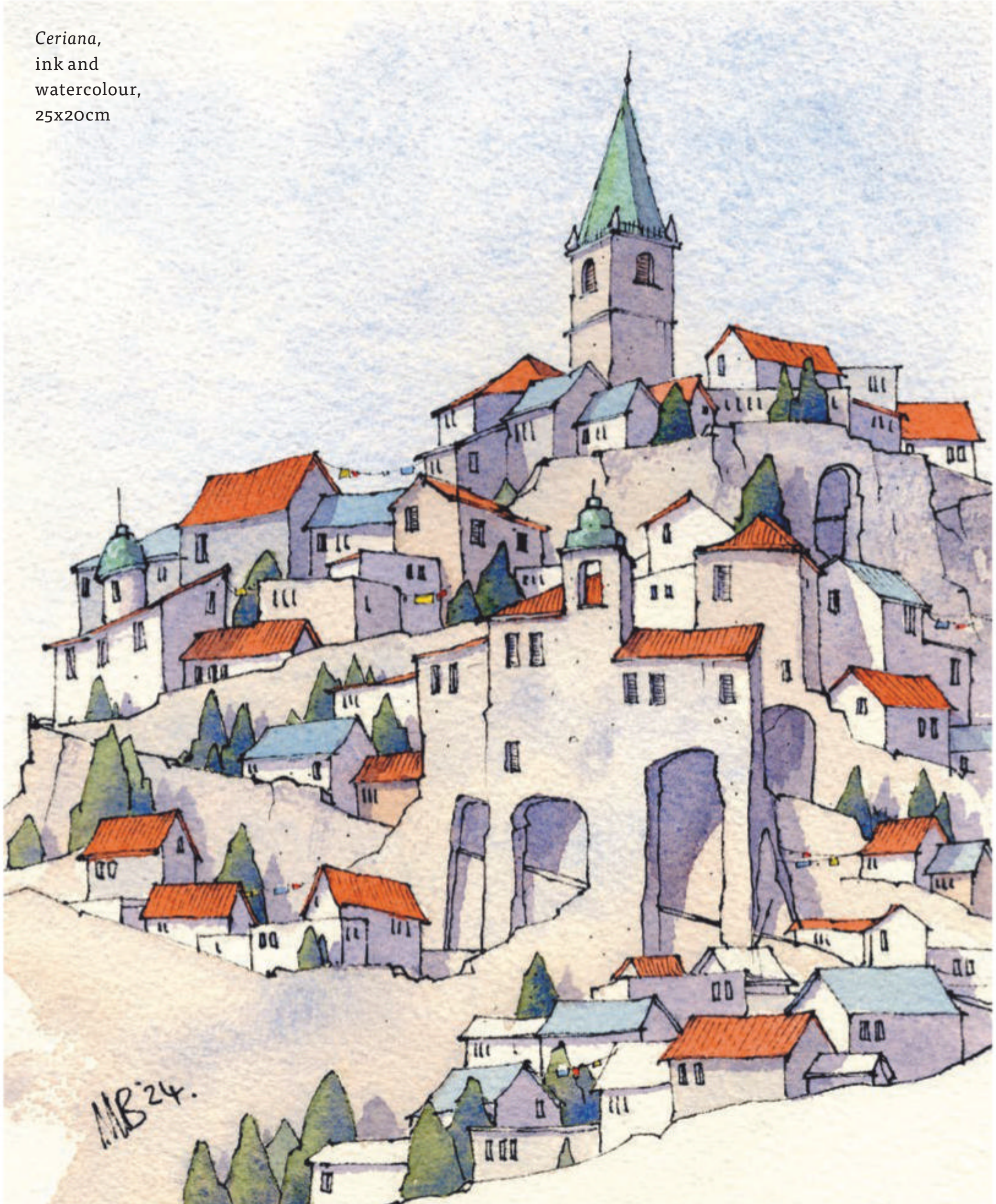
Ceriana,
ink and
watercolour,
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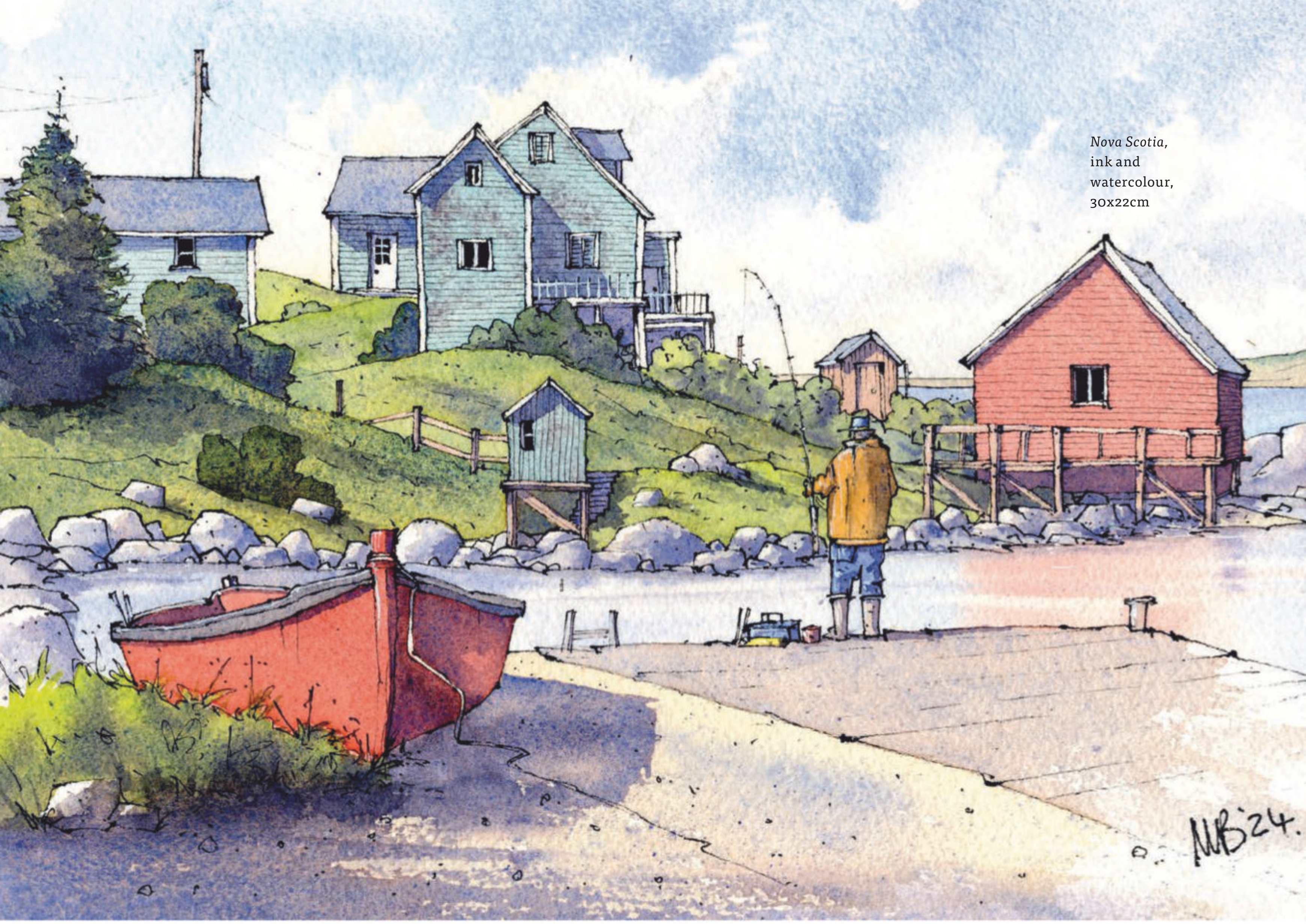
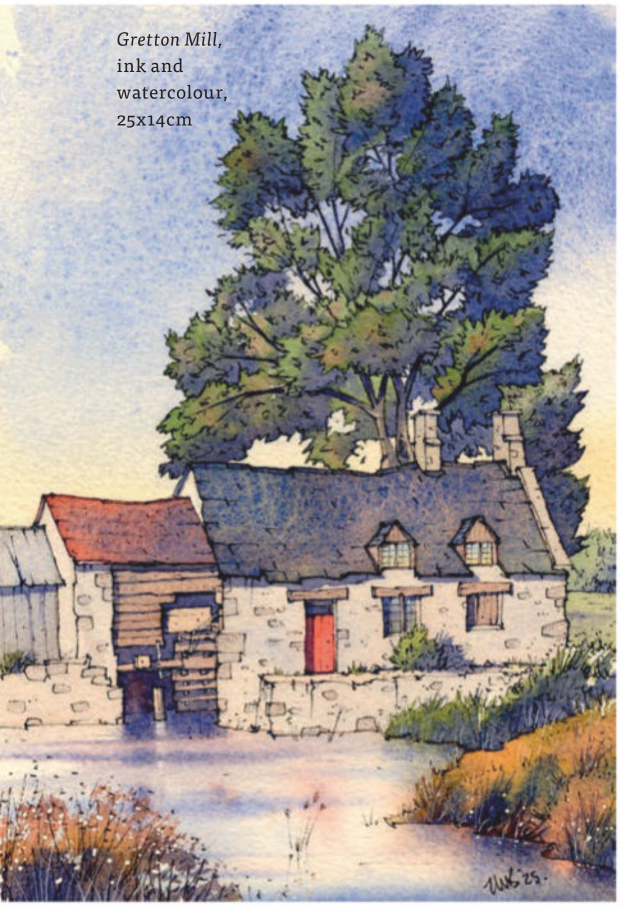


Nova Scotia, ink and watercolour, 30x22cm



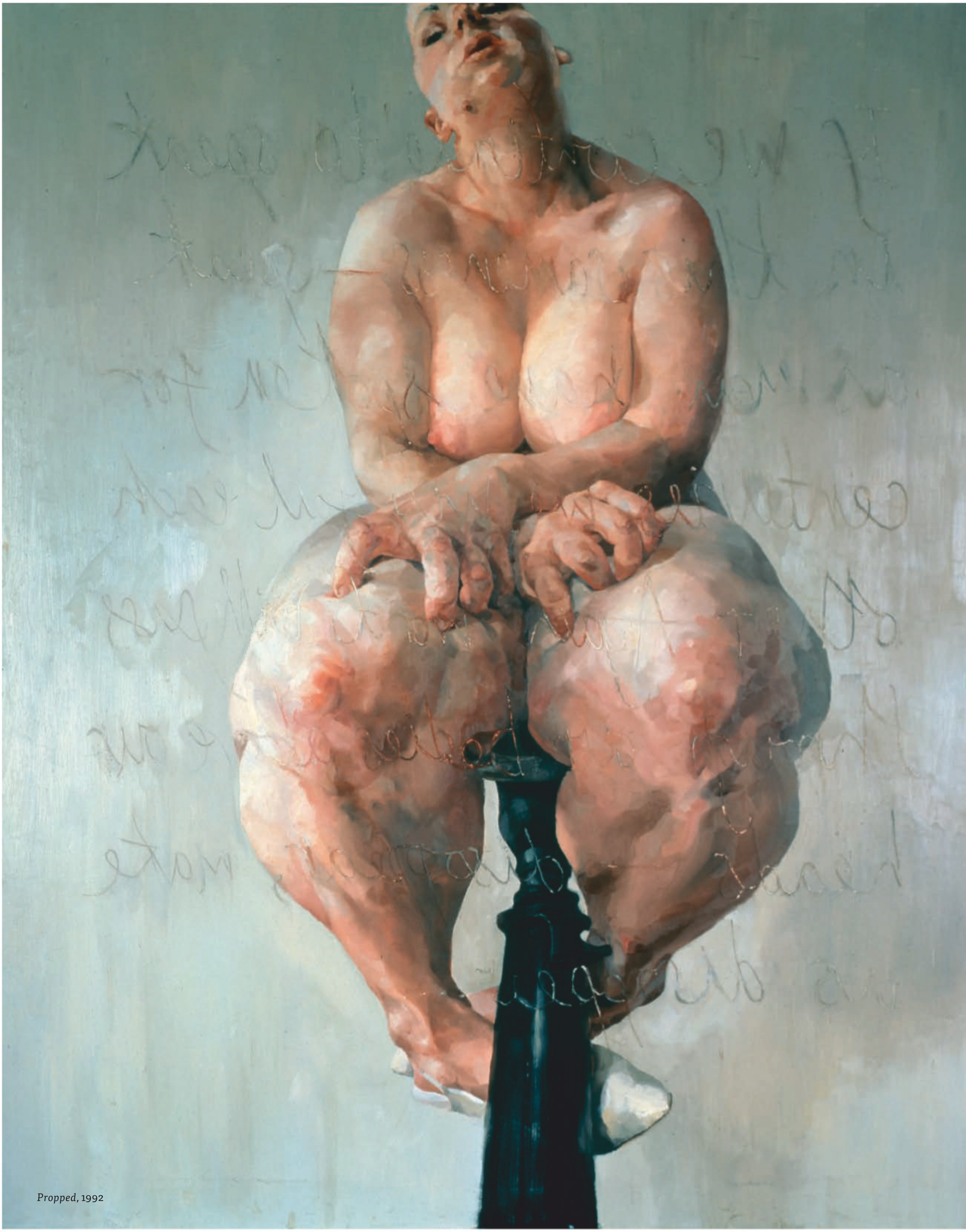
Gretton Mill, ink and watercolour, 25x14cm

that I feel the need to add 'inspired by' before naming the location. I believe this composition planning stage is the best opportunity to add my own creativity and make it uniquely mine. Even seemingly trivial things can add charm and character, such as adding additional colours and variety to the plants and bushes. I am not looking to portray an accurate representation of the scene or to take my illustrations too seriously.

Running a business has been a steep learning curve.
I've predominantly learnt through trial and error, not only in terms of what is successful but also what I enjoy doing. For example, I used to attend makers' markets but then found I wasn't really enjoying them, so I switched my efforts to developing and running watercolour workshops which – although they can be quite anxiety-provoking – I ultimately find more rewarding. The increase of my online presence has happened organically and gradually and therefore, has felt manageable. It has opened the door to a number of opportunities, for which I am really grateful.

I can struggle with confidence and experience 'imposter syndrome.'
I try to remind myself that you don't need to be a master to run a workshop, it's about demonstrating an approach that works for me and might work for others. I hope the fact that I haven't had a formal art education or been an illustrator for years is encouraging to other aspiring artists, so they believe they can do it too. With the increase in commercial generative AI use, there's a lot of uncertainty surrounding the eventual impact on human artists. Whatever happens, I know I will continue to enjoy illustrating; this is something I will do for the rest of my life, regardless.

I want viewers to feel they want to paint!
Being creative and making art more regularly has been really good for my mental health and I love it when people tell me I have inspired them to try watercolour or pick up a paintbrush again for the first time in years. Maybe it's the simple nature of my work which helps it feel accessible to beginner artists. Whatever the reason, to be a catalyst in someone's art journey is a privilege. ◻

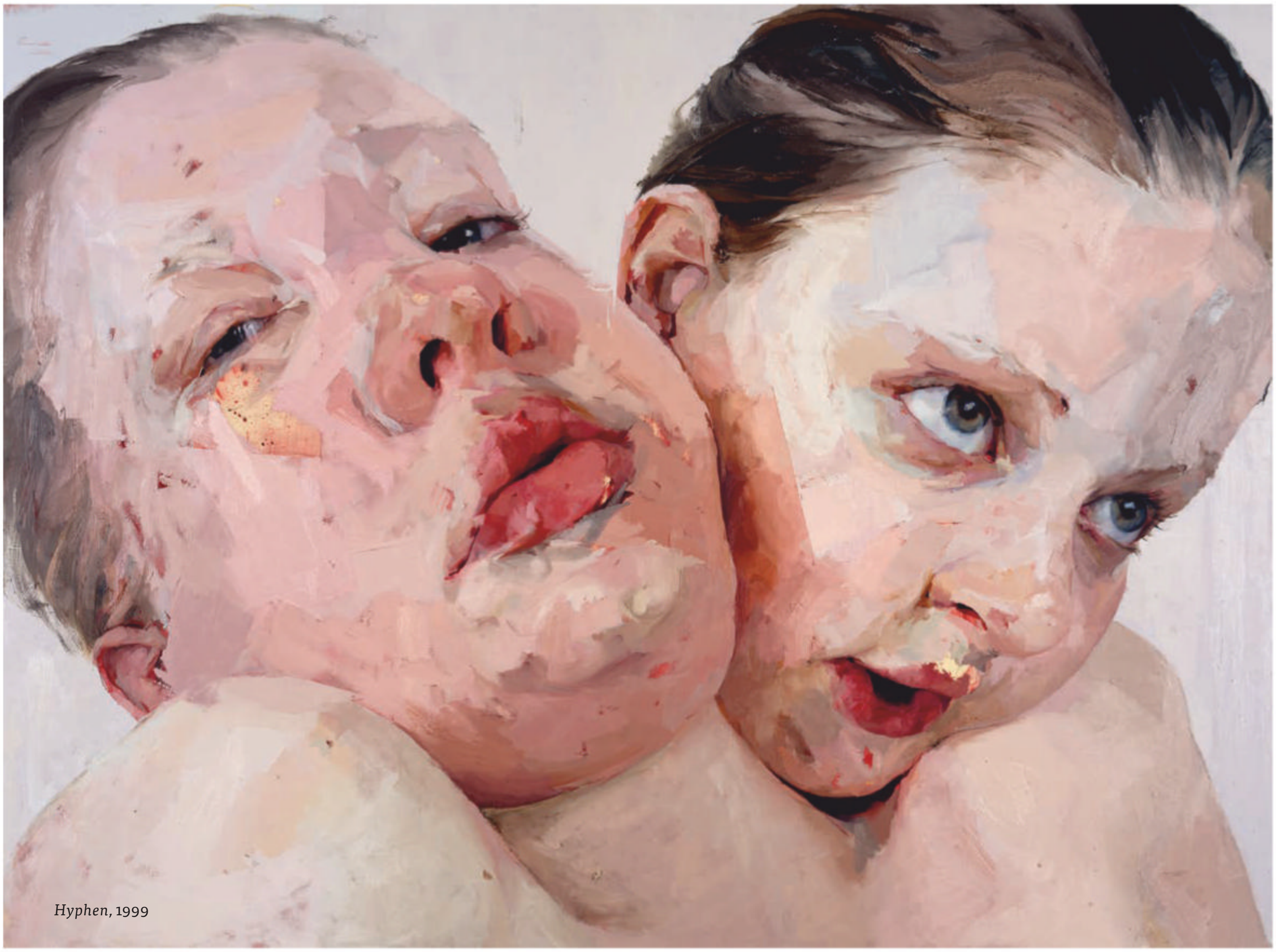


Propped, 1992

PRIVATE COLLECTION ©JENNY SAVILLE, COURTESY GAGOSIAN

Flesh tones

The artist **JENNY SAVILLE**, a painter of the female figure, has always been interested in the body as a subject. As she says: "It's what we are." The National Portrait Gallery is hosting a major retrospective, showing 50 of her paintings, the largest exhibition dedicated to her work in the UK. *Rosalind Ormiston* finds out about her career ▶



Hyphen, 1999

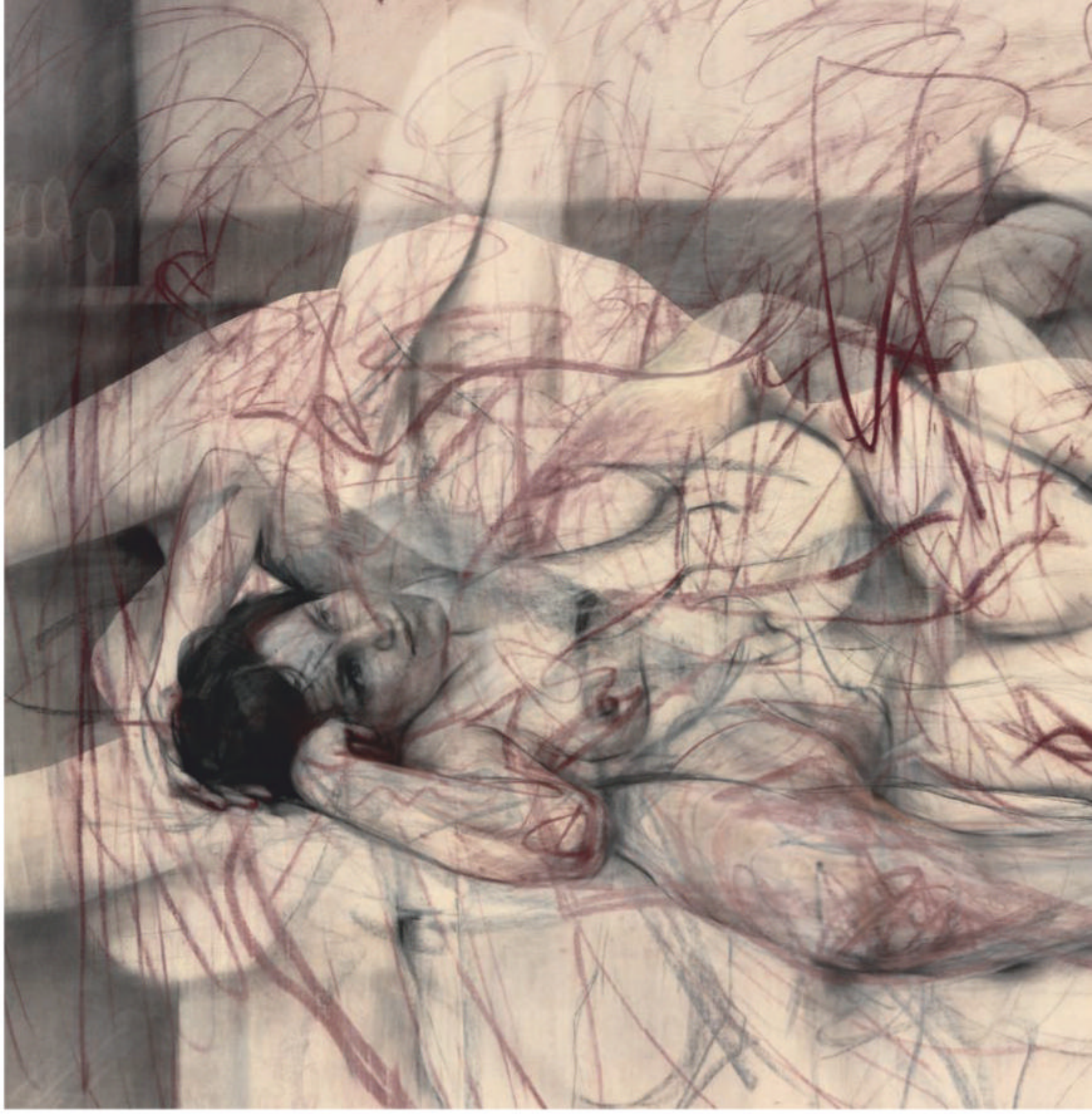
PRIVATE COLLECTION ©JENNY SAVILLE. COURTESY GAGOSIAN

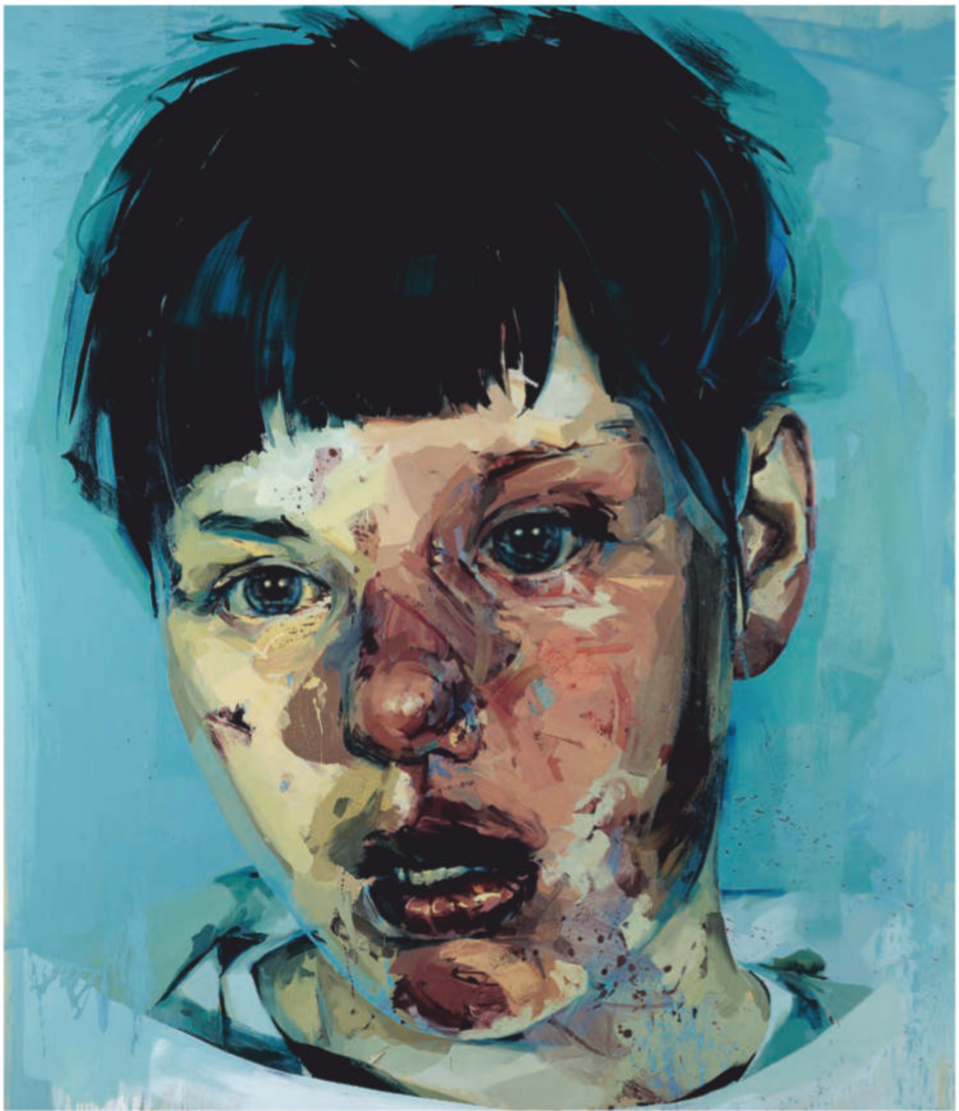
Jenny Saville is known for her large-scale portraits of the female body, often depicted with grotesque exaggeration and distorted features. She links the intricacies of bodily flesh to the layering of thick impasto paint on a stretched canvas, to realise the visual complexities of the human body. A major retrospective this summer at the National Portrait Gallery - *Jenny Saville: The Anatomy of Painting*, curated by Sarah Howgate - explores the development of her art practice and shows why Saville is lauded as a figurative painter.

Born in Cambridge, England in 1970, Saville studied art at the Glasgow School of Art, with a semester spent at the University of Cincinnati in 1991. While there, she travelled to New York and saw the work of Dutch-born American painter Willem de Kooning. When Saville discovered de Kooning's work, she saw the humanity in it and it led to the onset of layers of meaning within the flesh of her own works. "I knew in that moment, that person [de Kooning] was going to be very important in my life." One work in particular left a profound impression on her: the gestural abstract work *Easter Monday* (1955-56). In this, lines overlap, come together and dissolve into each other within an intensely raw visible process, the paint applied thickly, releasing shapes and figurations yet remaining abstract in composition.

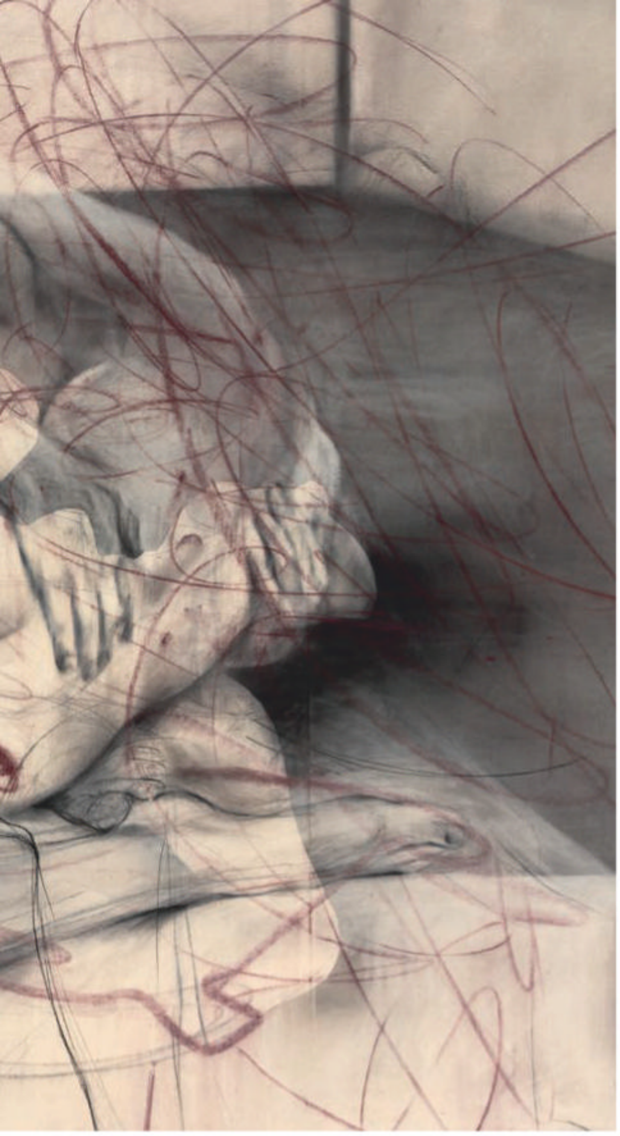
Saville's seminal work *Propped*, was created in 1992, a year after her trip to New York. This monumental painting is 2.13 metres high, and a naked full-length self-portrait that emphasises the human body's form, foreshortened and viewed from below. Observing it, one notices the model's hands crossed over with fingernails digging into fleshy gargantuan thighs. The action makes the viewer notice the texture of the skin and its depth and the model is posed as if looking into a clouded mirror. On the surface are words, scratched backwards, taken from the essay *When Our Lips Speak Together*, from the book *This Sex Which Is Not One*, published in English in 1985, by the French feminist writer Luce Irigaray.

Saville's early works went beyond the human figure as artform, to include the intellectual thoughts of the person viewed. This can be seen in *Branded*, also created in 1992, where barely visible words are written on the female naked figure clutching the skin of her stomach: 'SUPPORTIVE, DECORATIVE, IRRATIONAL, DELICATE.' Saville's work was multi-layered in physical application and inner meaning. *Propped* was a shock to many who saw it, and ▶





THE BOARD ART FOUNDATION ©JENNY SAVILLE. COURTESY GAGOSIAN



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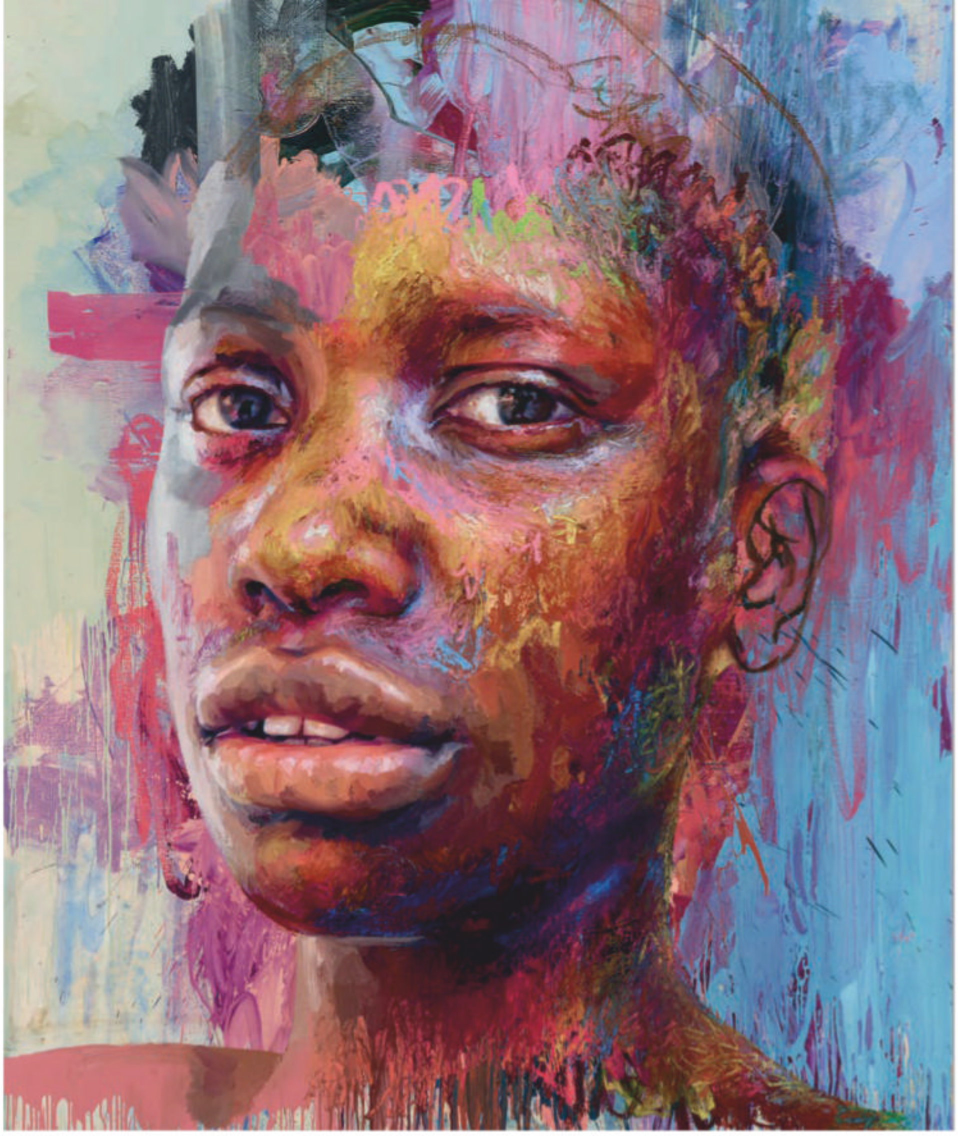

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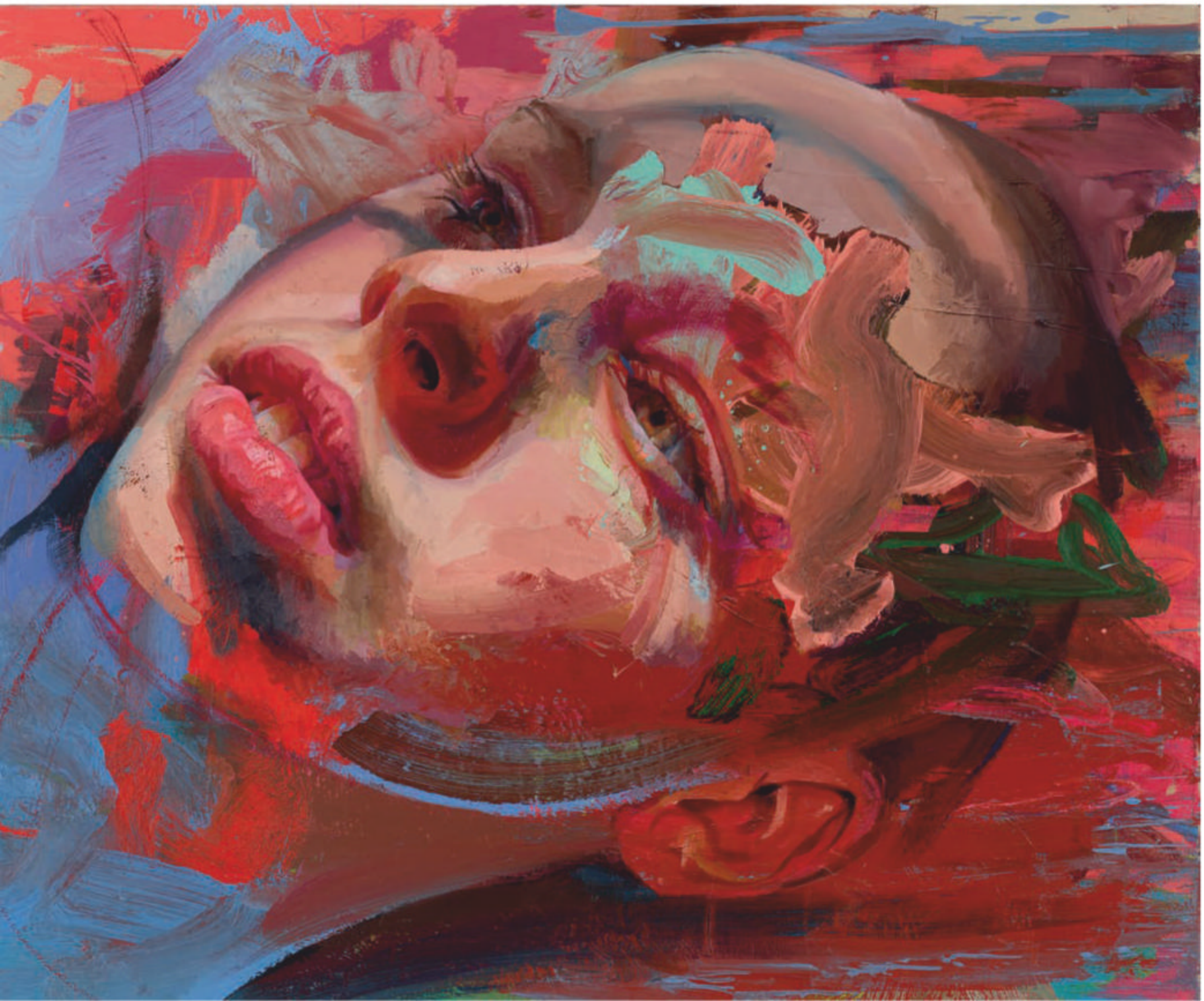
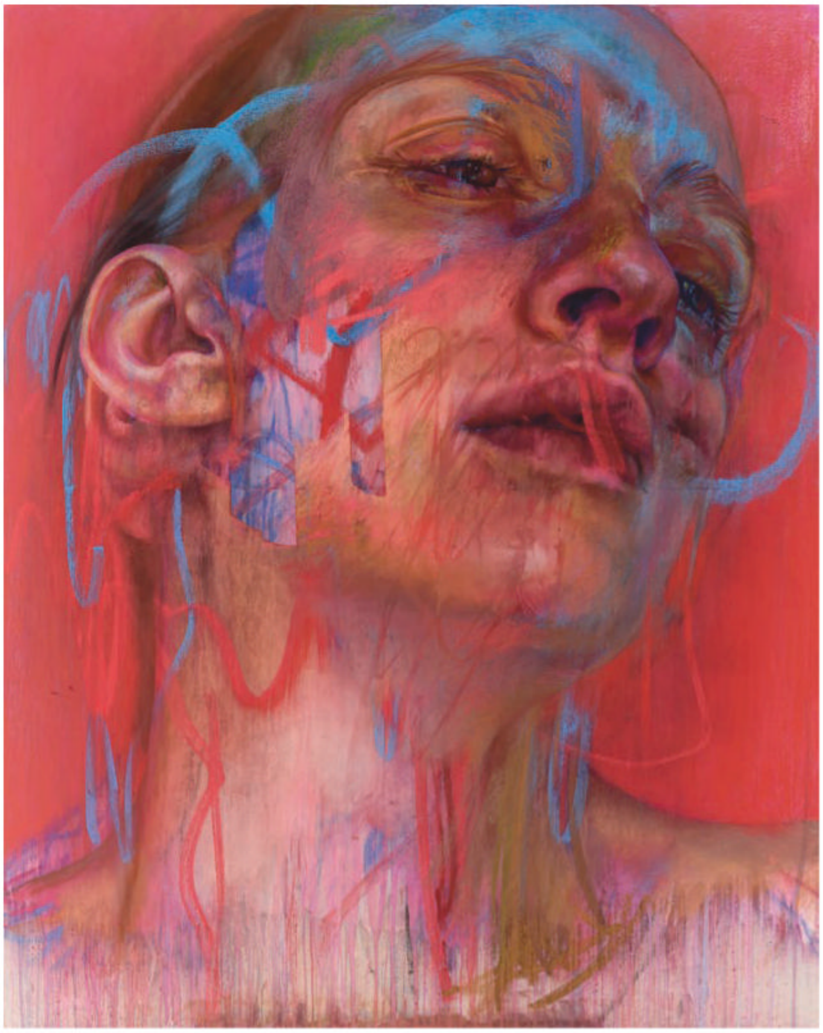
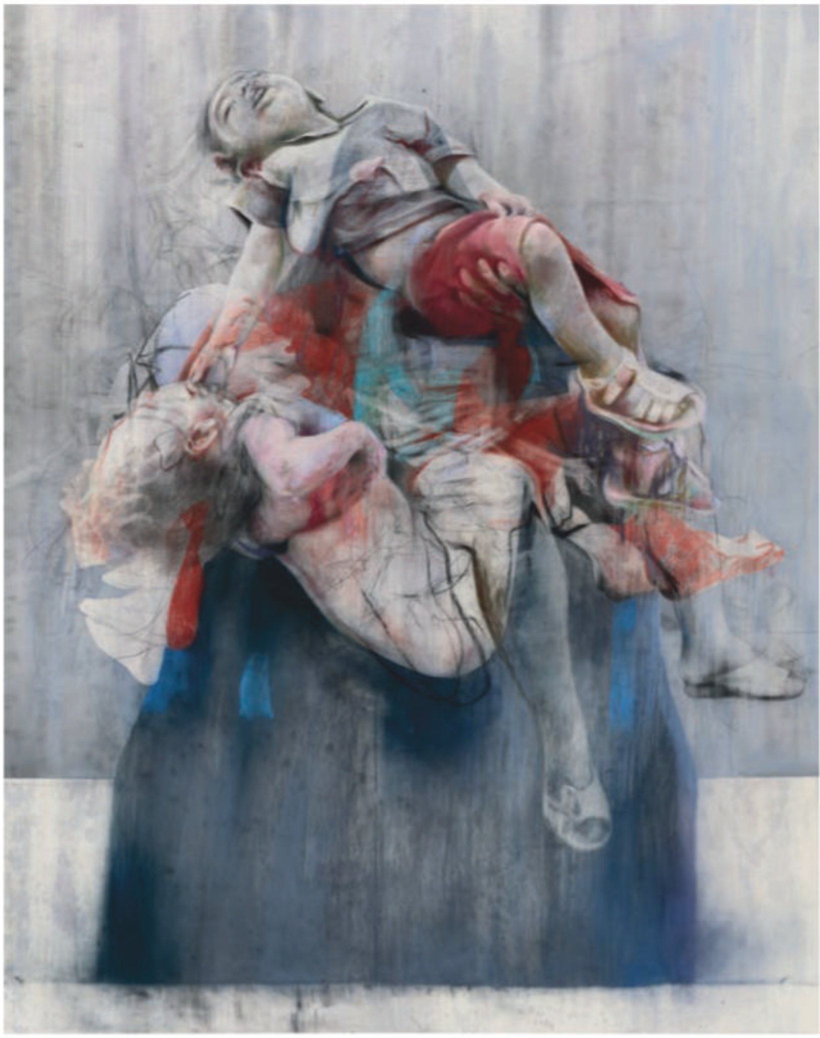


PRIVATE COLLECTION ©JENNY SAVILLE. COURTESY GAGOSIAN

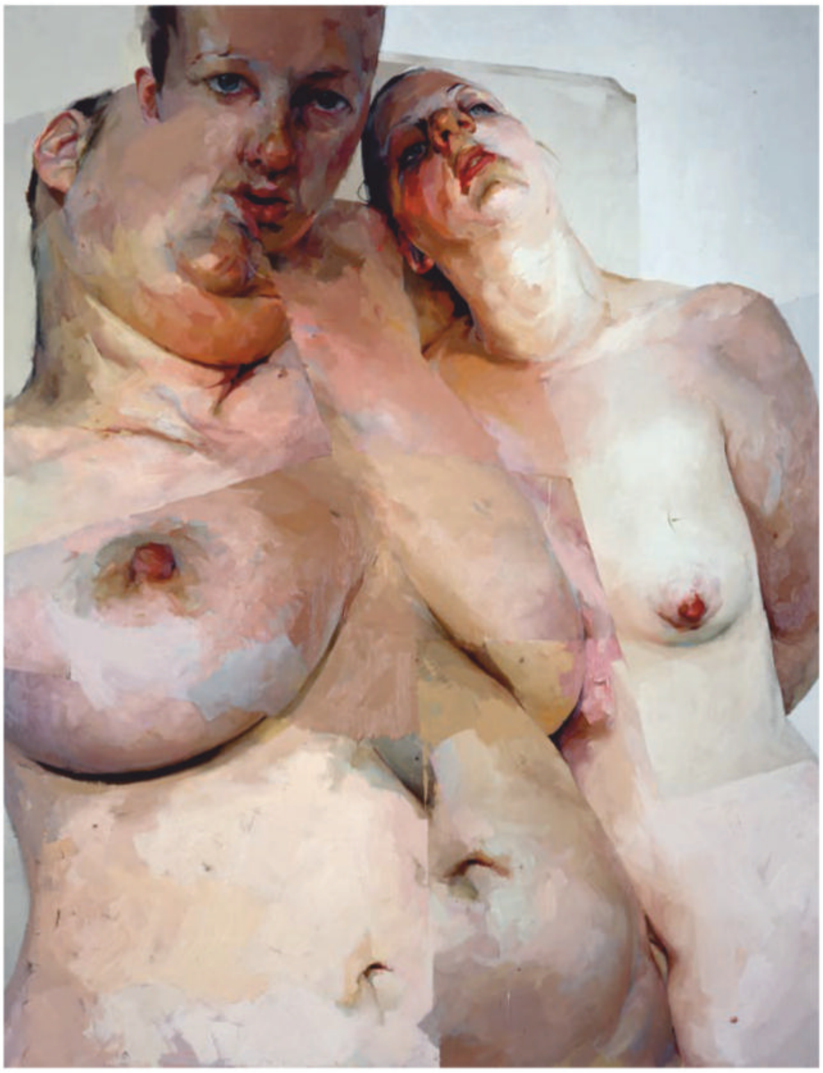
TOP LEFT *One out of two (symposium)*, 2016 **TOP RIGHT** *Chasah*, 2020 **BOTTOM LEFT** *Stare*, 2004-2005 **BOTTOM RIGHT** *Drift*, 2020-2022



©JENNY SAVILLE. COURTESY THE GEORGE ECONOMOU COLLECTION



COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST ©JENNY SAVILLE. COURTESY NGS



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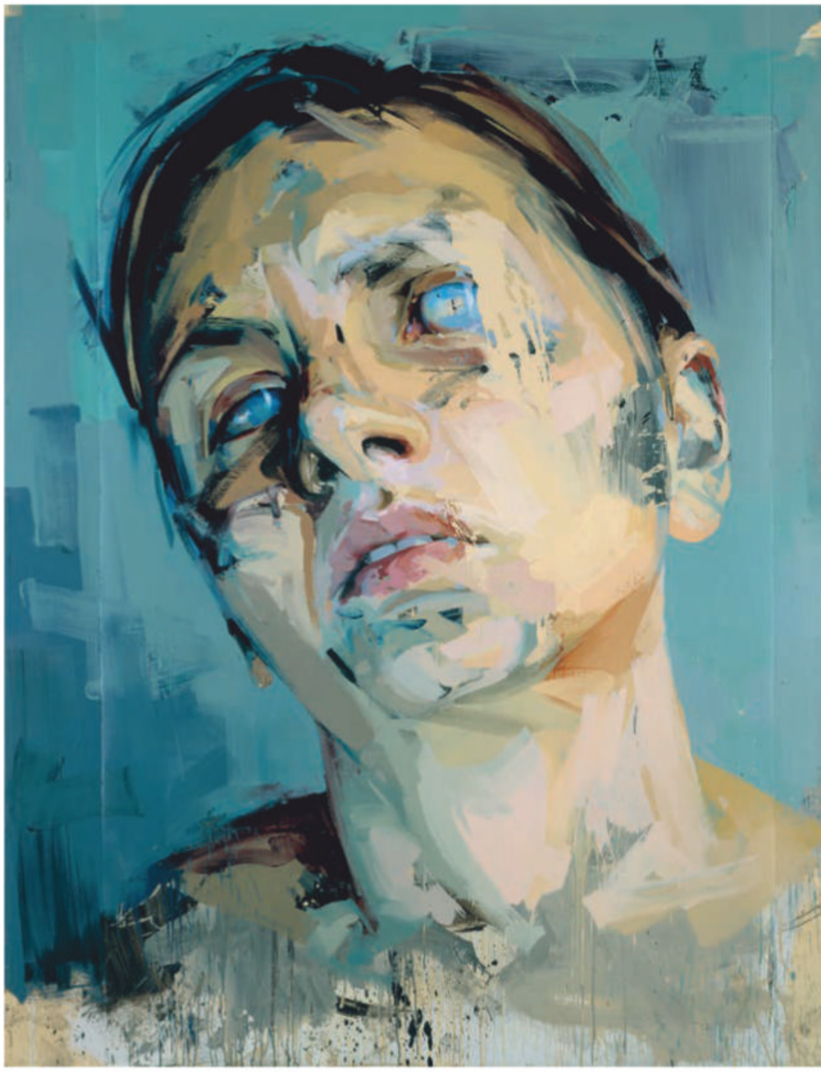

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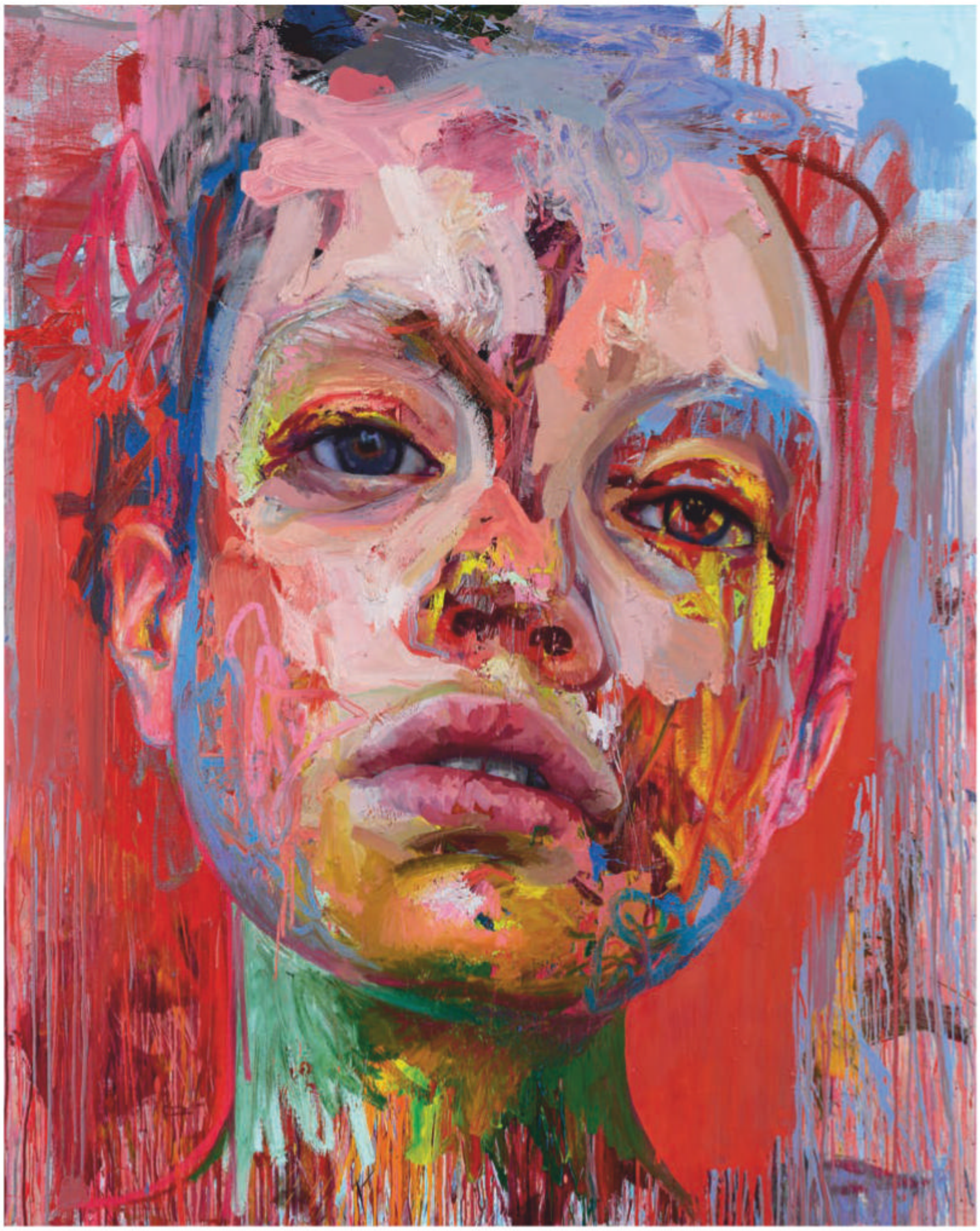


PRIVATE COLLECTION ©JENNY SAVILLE. COURTESY GAGOSIAN

OPPOSITE PAGE: TOP LEFT *Latent*, 2020-2022 **TOP RIGHT** *Aleppo*, 2017-2018 **BOTTOM LEFT** *Ruben's Flap*, 1998-1999 **BOTTOM RIGHT** *Rosetta II*, 2005-2006 **THIS PAGE** *Rupture*, 2020

ground-breaking in the art world. Her work was compared to the raw portraiture of Francis Bacon and the realism of the French still-life painter Charles Simeon Chardin portraying flesh. Here was a female successor to the figurative paintings of Rembrandt, Rubens and Lucian Freud.

When the art collector Charles Saatchi saw *Propped*, he bought every available painting by Saville. They were exhibited at Charles Saatchi's gallery in 1994. Much later, in 2018, *Propped* sold at Sotheby's for US$12.4 million; the highest record at auction for a living female artist.

Two years after creating *Propped*, Saville watched a plastic surgeon at work in New York, observing the physicality of cutting open the living body and manipulating flesh within the internal structure of it. It inspired and informed her work, visualised in scale changes. The later exhibition *Sensation: Young British Artists from the Saatchi Collection*, held at the Royal Academy, London in 1997, catapulted Saville and other young British artists into mainstream public attention, firmly establishing Saville's place in contemporary British art.

Saville continued to study de Kooning's work, and adopted some of his practical methods, such as using Pyrex bowls placed on the floor for different paints and using long-handled brushes for expressive sweeps of the canvas placed on the floor to paint, as in *Hyphen* (1999), where a deep red stain at the centre began the work.

The exhibition currently at the National Portrait Gallery will allow visitors to follow Saville's working methods. For example, she states that studying de Kooning's painting *Door to River* aided her understanding that mixing two or three base colours could achieve tonality, wet-on-wet creating an illusion of mass in an abstract that remained physical. The exhibition catalogue's interview and essays, further explore her creative techniques.

Saville states that photography has helped her to play with the reconstruction of reality, using photographs to create collages. She mixes daylight images with flash-photography, fusing naturalism with artifice, to portray aspects of light on the skin. This technique was used for *Rubens Flap* (1998-1999) to explore the physicality of the human body, seeing flesh as a moveable mass. The expression Rubens Flap refers to a surgical procedure, seen by Saville, that takes flesh from a woman's thigh for breast reconstruction. It showed her how flesh can be removed to change the human form and encouraged her to play with image size and angles.

In the vast 2005-2006 painting, *Rosetta II* (252x187.5cm), Saville tried to encapsulate the 'mysticism' of a blind person's stare. At this time, she was creating the androgynous *Stare* series of heads (2004-11), which found her not only analysing the anatomy of the head but also the anatomy of the painting. She placed the canvas on the floor, starting with long sweeping marks to create 'a dynamism.' The paint could be splashed on or streaked to generate expressive marks and shapes. The large-scale series is mesmerising, particularly *Stare* (2004-2005) which measures 305x250cm, allowing a near-forensic study of the expressions of the human face.

Saville's drawings are also large-scale. *One out of two (symposium)* in charcoal and pastel on canvas is 152×225cm, and *Aleppo*, created in 2017-2018, shows Saville using a sculptural form to explore realities, to compare real and artificial worlds.

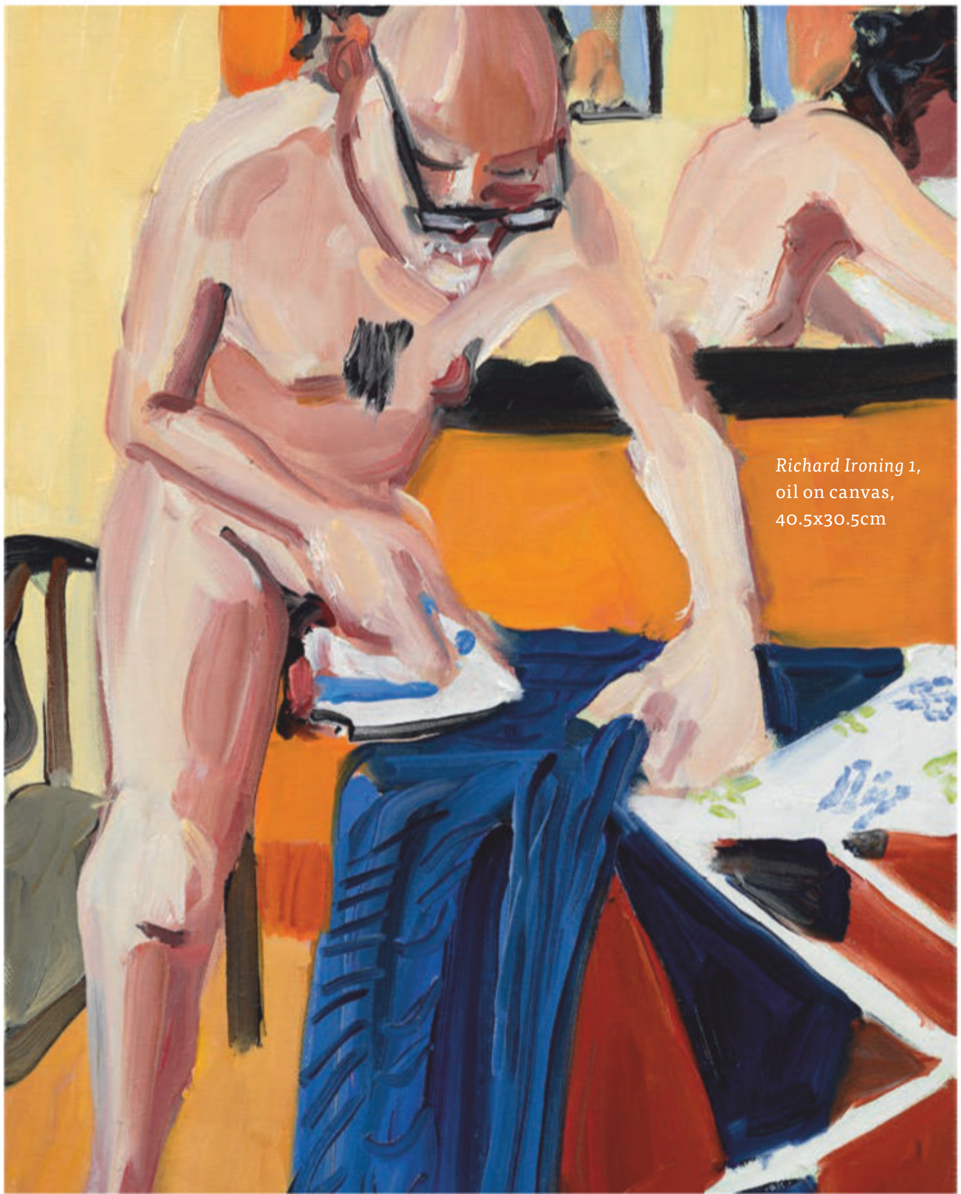
"I'm trying to get simultaneous realities to exist in the same image," she is quoted as saying in the NPG catalogue. "The contradiction of a drawing on top of a drawing replicates the slippage... But it's about the memory of pictures, too."

Also included in the show will be *Latent*, 2020-2022, the "big head" as Saville calls it, based on her features, but not a self-portrait. Saville sees it as a sort of treatise on painting, about the reality of life, and the realism of bodily flesh.

This essence is also in the 'head' portraits, like *Chasah* and *Rupture*, both of which were created in 2020, which visually peel off layers of paint to reveal the person, and the remarkably beautiful, near surreal *Drift* (2020-2022) in oil and oil stick on canvas, which sums up Jenny Saville's deep understanding of the human form.

Jenny Saville: The Anatomy of Painting is at the National Portrait Gallery, London WC2H 0HE, until 7 September 2025. □

A prince among men



Richard Ironing 1, oil on canvas, 40.5x30.5cm

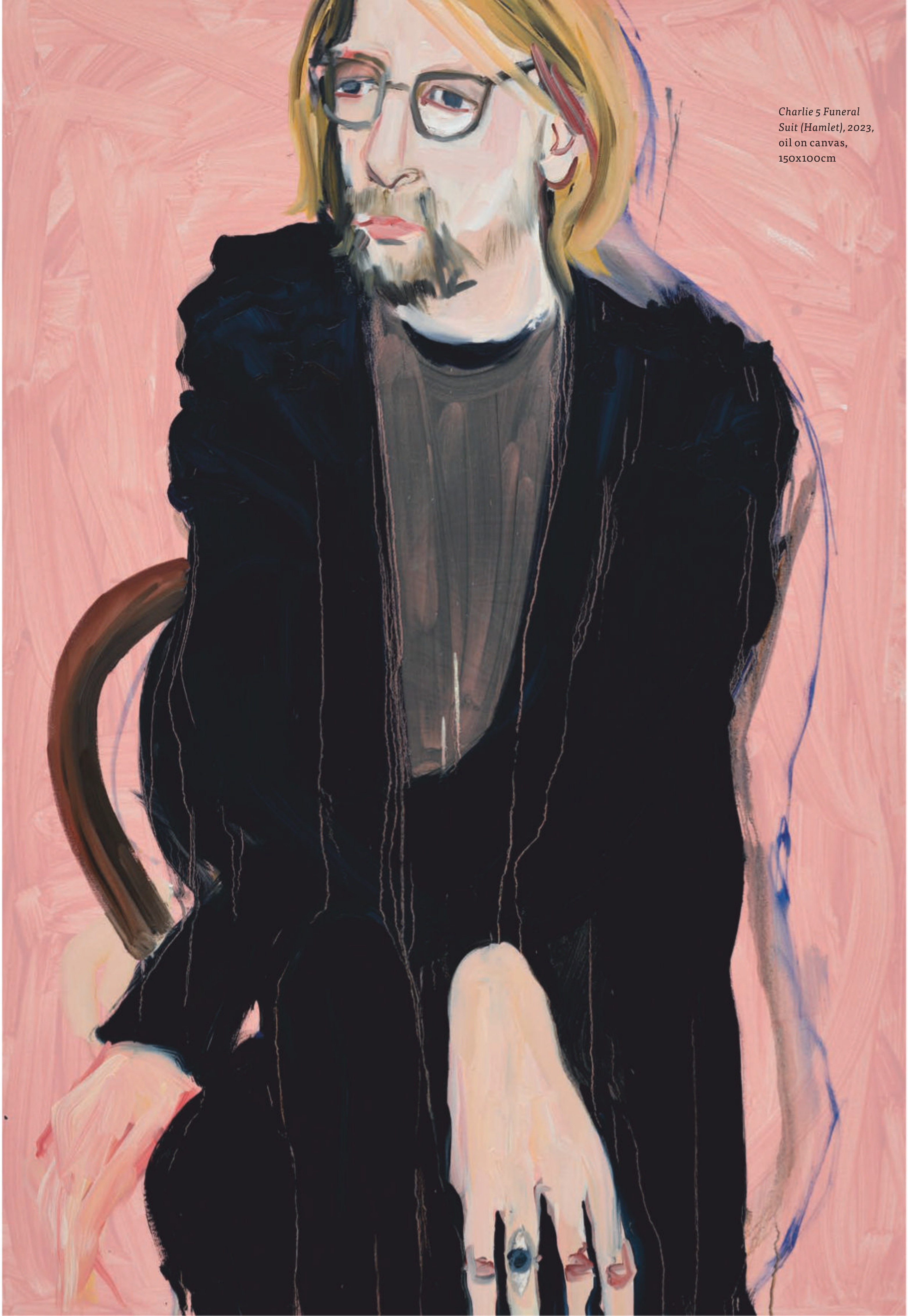
COURTESY THE ARTIST, VICTORIA MIRO AND SKARSTEDT

A major solo exhibition at The Exchange, in Penzance, features new works by Chantal Joffe, renowned for her bold, expressive approach to figurative painting. *Sarah Edghill* hears how she explores her subjects

Chantal Joffe has never been one to conform to the norm, and her new exhibition, *The Prince*, seems set to challenge expectations. "I hope people are surprised to find a giant naked man lounging around," she says.

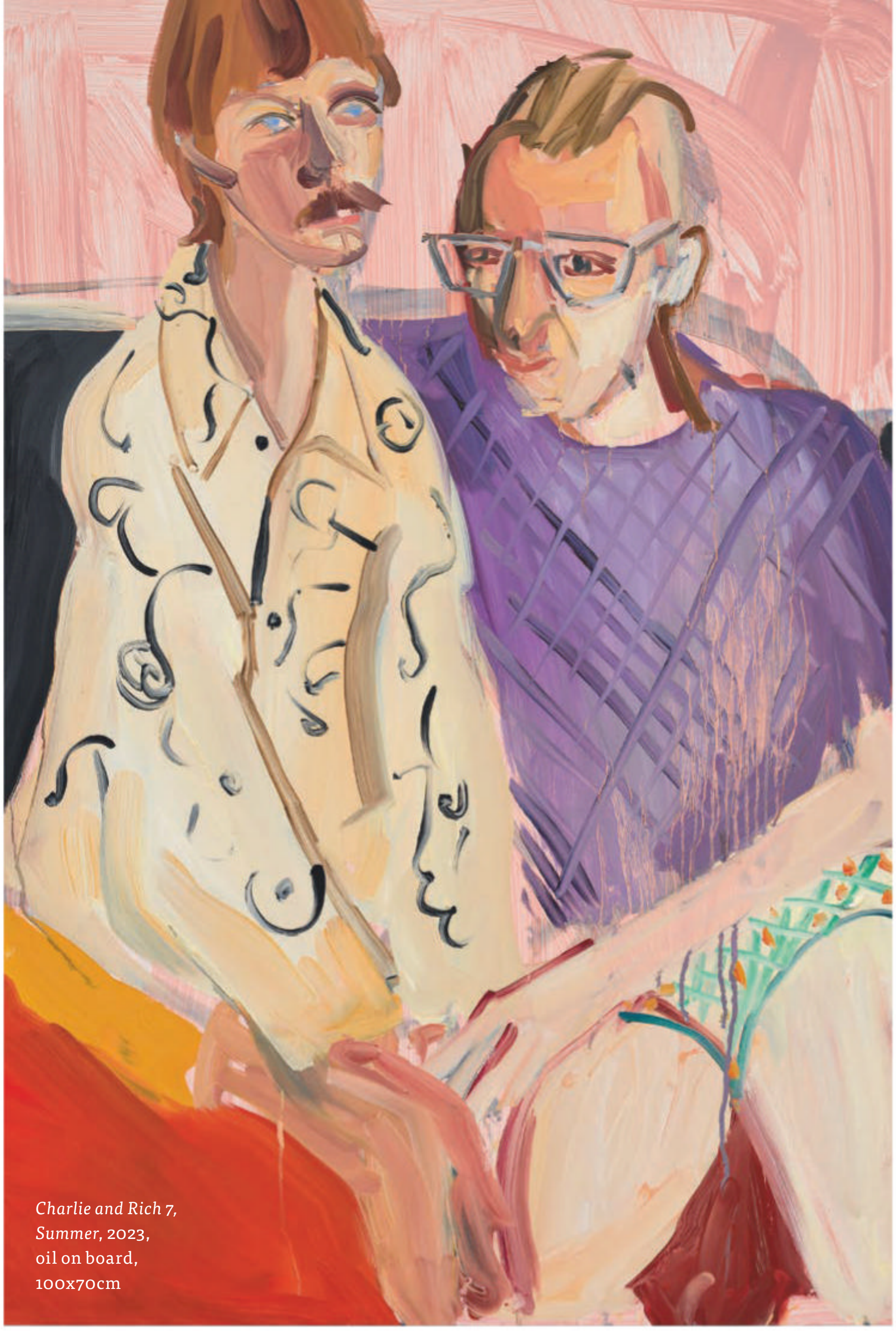
The exhibition's title, *The Prince*, comes from conversations with the writer Olivia Laing, whose essay of the same name accompanies the exhibition. There are two large-scale series of paintings, accompanied by smaller portraits, all of which explore masculinity as a fluid state, full of possibilities of tenderness and change.

Born into an artistic and creative family in 1969, Chantal Joffe did a foundation course at Camberwell College of Arts, followed by an honours degree in Fine Art at Glasgow School of Arts. She holds an MA from the Royal College of Art and was awarded the ▸



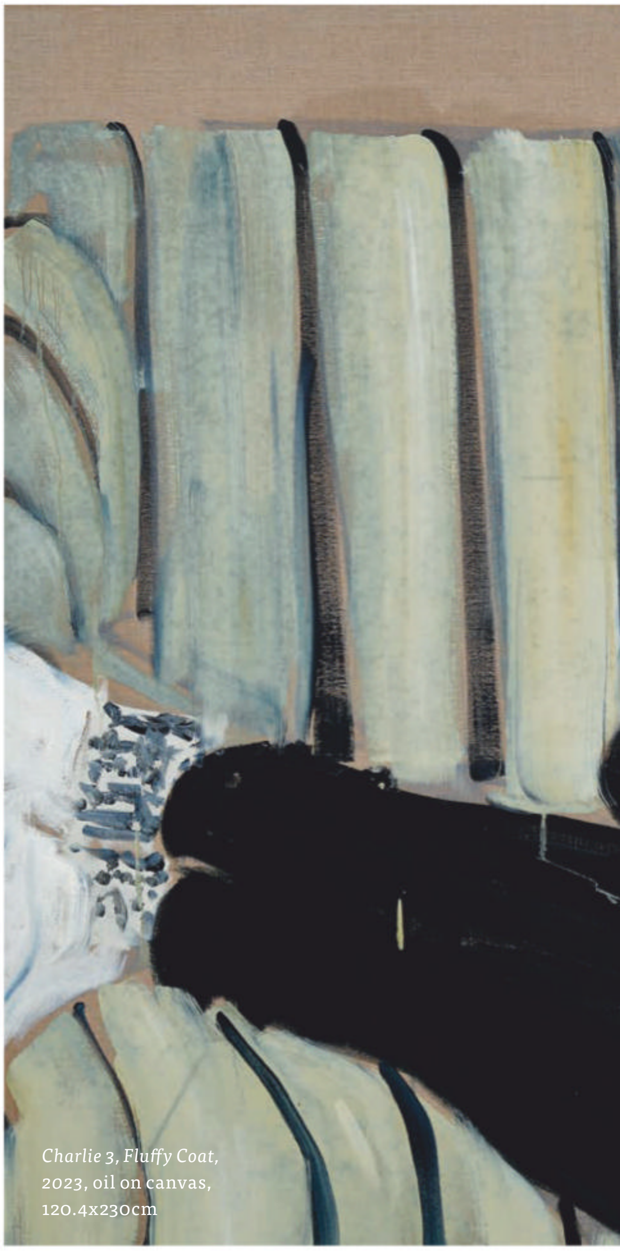
Charlie 5 Funeral Suit (Hamlet), 2023, oil on canvas, 150x100cm

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND VICTORIA MIRO



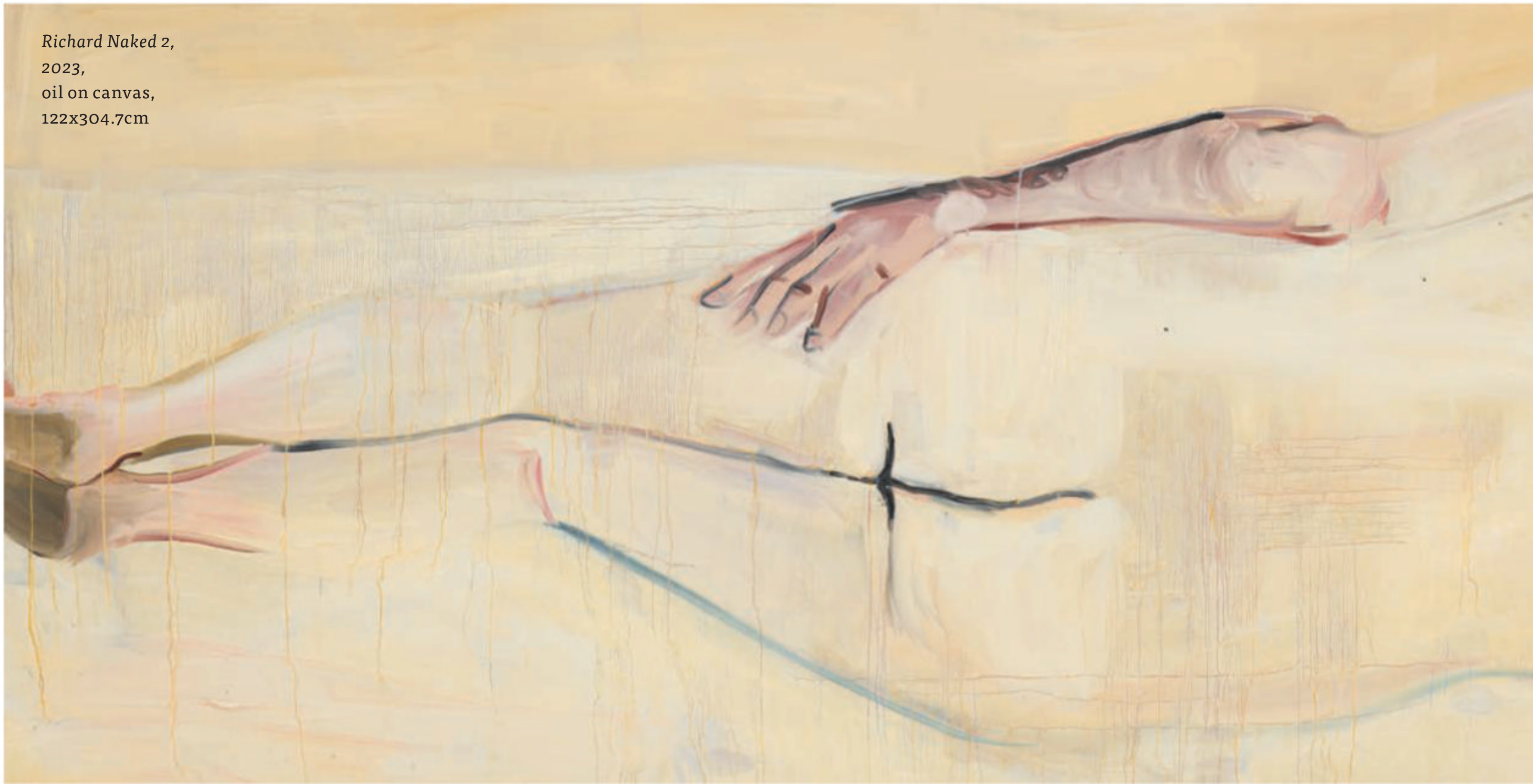
Charlie and Rich 7, Summer, 2023, oil on board, 100x70cm

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND VICTORIA MIRO



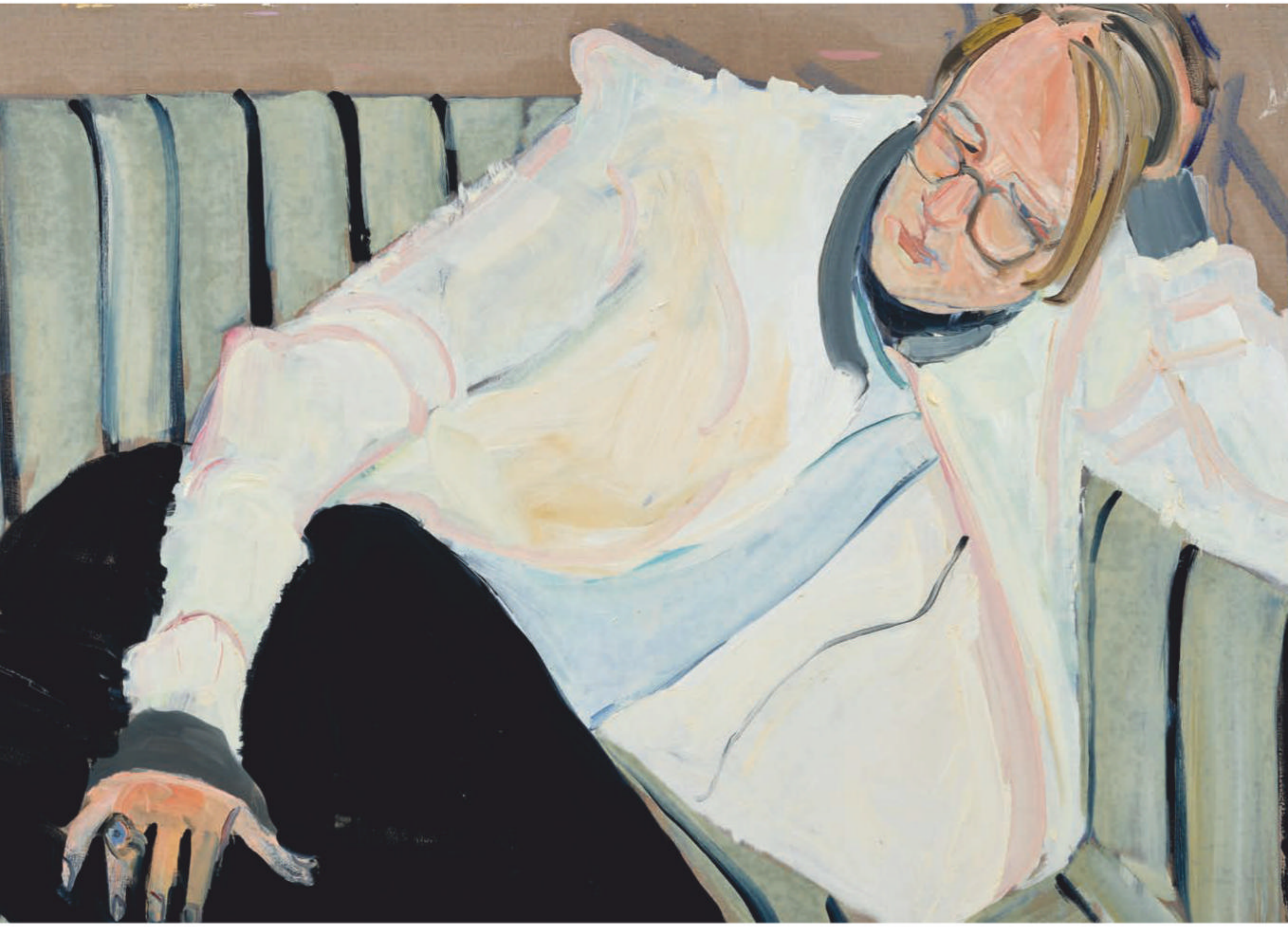
Charlie 3, Fluffy Coat, 2023, oil on canvas, 120.4x230cm

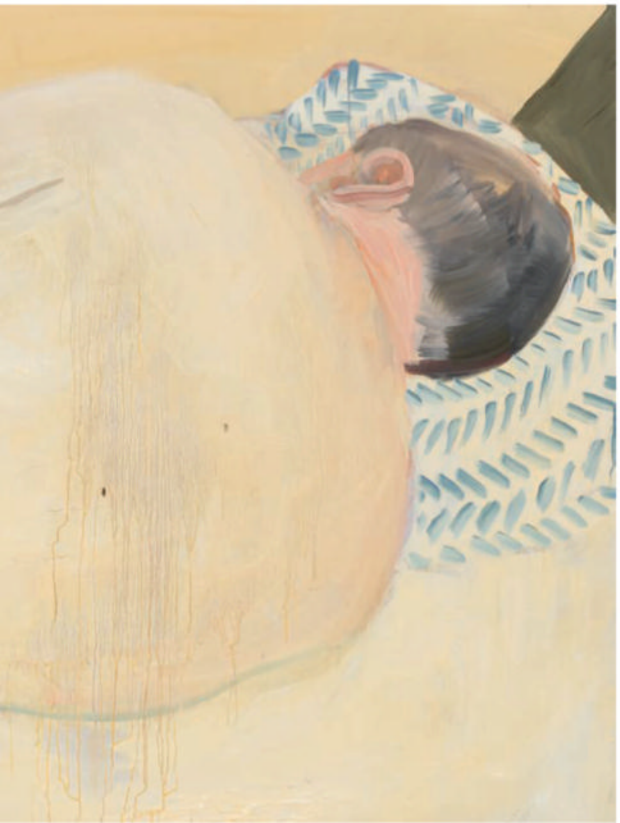
COURTESY THE ARTIST AND VICTORIA MIRO



Richard Naked 2, 2023, oil on canvas, 122x304.7cm

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND VICTORIA MIRO





prestigious Royal Academy Wollaston Prize in 2006.

She has a uniquely contemporary approach to portraiture. Her paintings are often large-scale – sometimes three metres tall – and some have been so large that she needed to set up scaffolding to work on them. "I've always painted people in some form – head, bodies, faces," she says. She paints using huge, bold brushstrokes, ignoring drips or blobs of paint, and occasionally leaves old outlines visible. Her direct and liquid painting style fills her subjects with personality. She has always used her work to explore the relationship between subject and observer, capturing the intricacies of human presence. Her self-portraits and paintings, often of those closest to her, are candid and unflinching and Joffe paints a person as they are in the moment, acknowledging that a portrait can only ever capture a glimpse of a person's life.

For many years, her work depicted the intricacies of women and motherhood. But her new work on display at The Exchange focuses on masculinity. "I like that the title *The Prince* has all kinds of different connotations," she says. "These paintings are about masculinity and they are all people who identify as men, but I wanted to show there are different ways of seeing what it is to be a man. I was thinking a lot about what it's like to paint somebody who's different from yourself in any way and that's what this show is about."

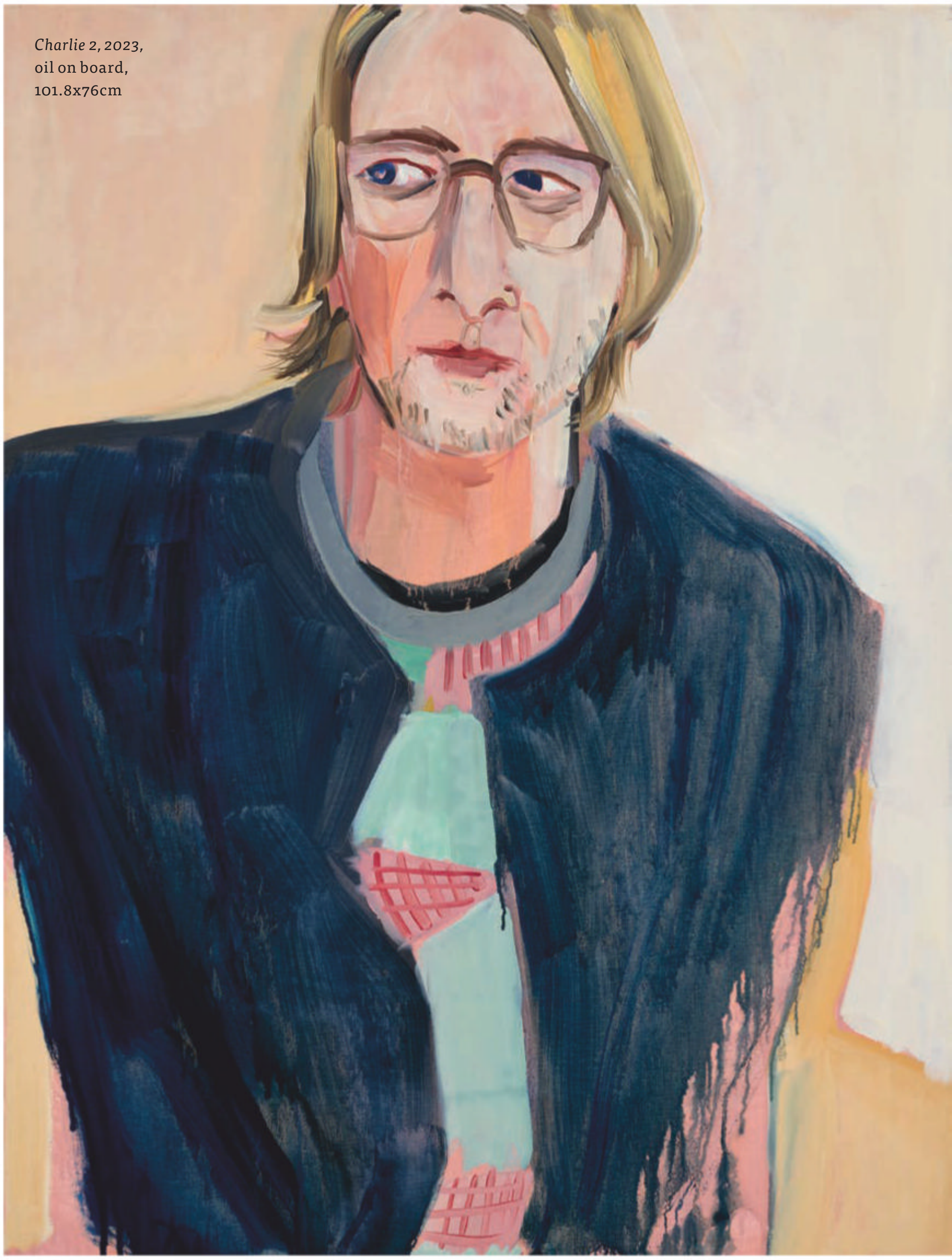
The first series of four large-scale paintings shows Joffe's partner, Richard, naked, engaged in traditionally domestic or feminine activities. In one he is lounging on a bed, in another he is standing naked ironing a shirt. "There's something about seeing someone completely naked," says Joffe. "In these paintings Richard is a prince because he's inhabiting his naked self." ▸

The second series of paintings on display depicts Joffe's friend, the writer Charlie Porter, in the immediate aftermath of the death of both his parents. "During the time he was sitting for me he was making his own clothes, which was something that had come about after the death of his parents," says Joffe. "Charlie is totally a prince, in that it's almost like he has come into his inheritance in some strange way. Like he's sewing himself a new skin.

"I like to think that being painted provides a kind of safe space for someone to be looked at and to be seen. I love to hear people and it's the idea that they're being listened to and seen."

Joffe was intrigued by the idea of an exhibition where men could view paintings of other men which weren't a cliché of masculinity. "I wanted it to be about different ways of seeing what it is to be a man, understanding vulnerability," she explains. "All the people in my paintings are my friends, people I love, and that's what matters. But I liked the idea of an exhibition where men could see paintings of other men where they felt vulnerable or domestic or beautiful. So, there were none of the usual expectations about being a man, just different possibilities of what you could be. It's my hope that a kid might wander into the exhibition and get a different sense of who he or she could grow up to be. So, if there is any way that someone saw themselves in this kind of painting, that would be a good thing."

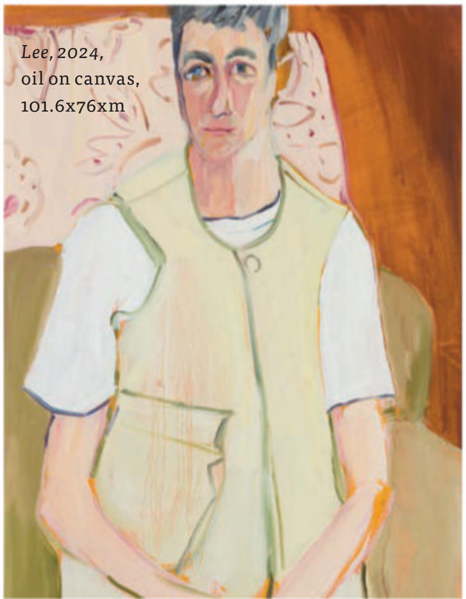
I wanted to show there are different ways of seeing what it is to be a man


Charlie 2, 2023, oil on board, 101.8x76cm

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND VICTORIA MIRO

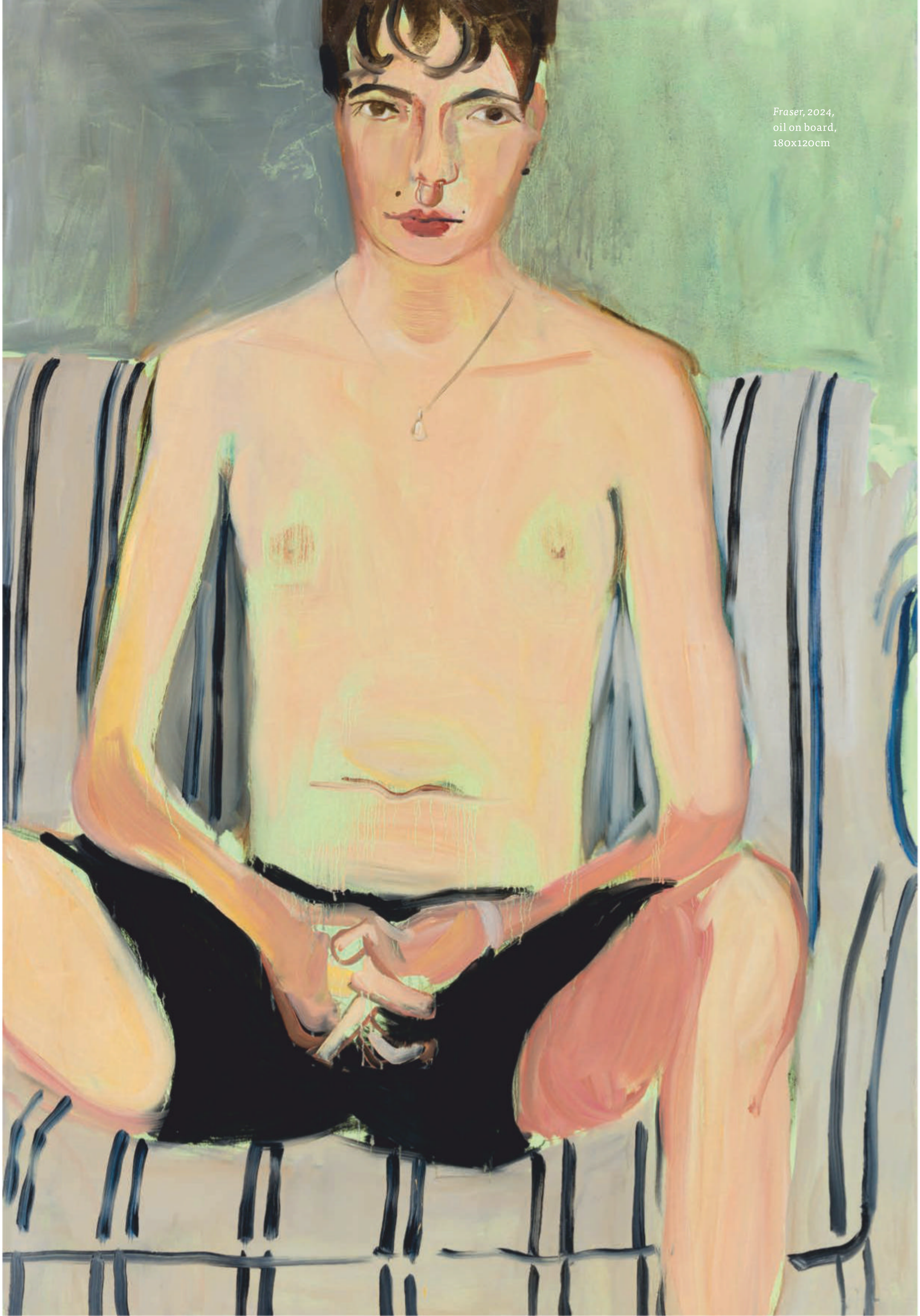
Joffe has exhibited nationally and internationally at venues including the Whitechapel Gallery, the Royal Academy of Arts and the Saatchi Gallery. Her work is in numerous institutional and private collections, including the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, the National Portrait Gallery in London, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Recently she created a major public work for the Elizabeth Line in London titled *A Sunday Afternoon in Whitechapel*, on view at Whitechapel's Elizabeth Line station.

Although she now lives and works in London, Joffe's mother used to live in Penzance, and she found it very moving to return there when she went to Cornwall to prepare for the exhibition. "It was really special; I hadn't been back to Penzance for a long time. I went to try to find my mum's house and I hadn't been there in 25 years, but my feet knew the way. It's so weird how it's in your body, the memory is literally there. It was a really happy time in my life to come and see her there, and it would have meant a lot to her, for me to do this show."


Lee, 2024, oil on canvas, 101.6x76xm

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND VICTORIA MIRO

The Prince is on at The Exchange, Princes Street, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 2NL and runs until 1 November 2025. *newlynartgallery.co.uk* ◻



Fraser, 2024,
oil on board,
180x120cm

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STEP-BY-STEP studio

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO PAINT AND CREATE

ELAINE GILL is a pen and watercolour artist and illustrator based in the west of Ireland. She is known for *Your Story Illustrated*, commissioned pieces of art showing memorable, important and special places. Here, she shares her tips on sketching buildings

1

Ahead of the initial sketch, it's good practice to spend a few minutes tracing the building by eye, observing the lines, shapes, shadows and little details you wish to include. Drawing a small sunshine in the corner of your sketch helps establish the light source, ensuring your shadows and lighting stay consistent throughout.

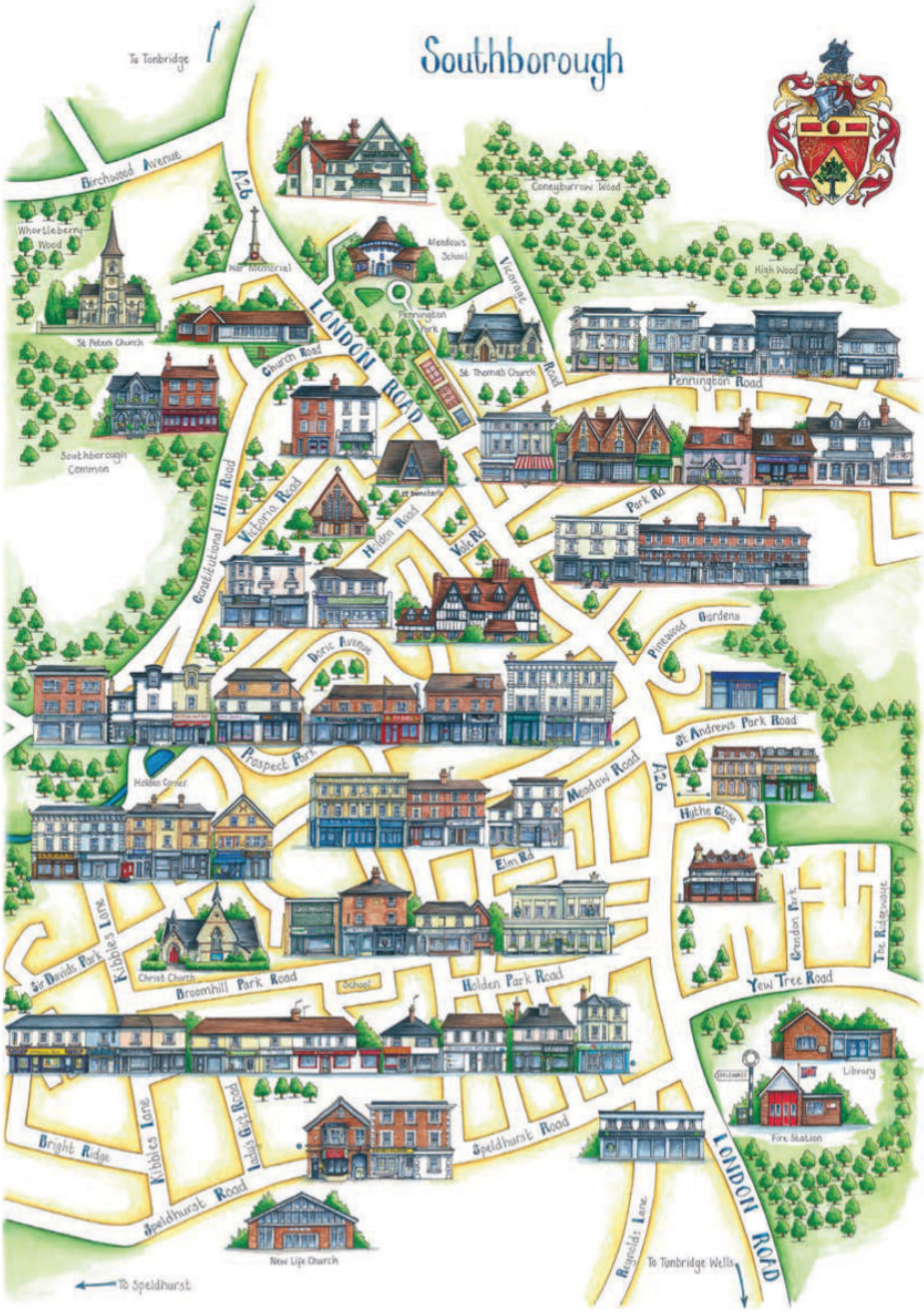
2

I love fine detail and marvel at the design and workmanship of beautiful historic buildings, especially those with a story. But if you're overwhelmed by the detail of a building, try focusing on the negative space; look at the shapes around the object rather than the object itself. This shift in focus can make complex structures simpler to draw.

3

I always sketch in pen; it helps me observe what I'm drawing. Stay focused and draw the simplified line to describe the details. Don't be afraid to fill your initial sketch with detail, especially elements that stand out or define the building's character. A busy working sketch is easier to refine than a sparse one – you can always edit and simplify later.

elainegill.co.uk ◻


Southborough
To Tonbridge
Birchwood Avenue
A26
Whortleberry Wood
War Memorial
St Peters Church
Church Road
LONDON ROAD
Meadows School
Pennington Park
St Thomas Church
Vicarage Road
Coneyburrow Wood
High Wood
Pennington Road
Southborough Common
Constitutional Hill Road
Victoria Road
St Dunstan's
Holden Road
Vale Rd
Park Rd
Pinewood Gardens
Doric Avenue
Prospect Park
Holden Corner
St Andrews Park Road
Meadow Road
A26
Hythe Close
Elm Rd
Grendon Park
The Ridgewaye
Sir Davids Park
Kibbles Lane
Christ Church
Broomhill Park Road
School
Holden Park Road
Yew Tree Road
Library
Fire Station
Bright Ridge
Kibbles Lane
Ladys Gift Road
Speldhurst Road
Speldhurst Road
New Life Church
Reynolds Lane
To Tunbridge Wells
LONDON ROAD
To Speldhurst

SOUTHBOROUGH MAP, PEN AND WATERCOLOUR, 45X65CM

Go to extremes

In the second of his series on acrylics, **HASHIM AKIB** shows how to punctuate your focal point by playing up the lights and playing down the darks

HASHIM'S MATERIALS

Paints
Liquitex and Vallejo Heavy Body Acrylics:
Yellow Ochre
Lemon Yellow
Cadmium Orange
Red Oxide
Sap Green
Phthalo Green
Cobalt Blue
Phthalo Blue
Permanent Blue
Violet
Prussian Blue
Raw Sienna
Titanium White

Brushes:
Daler-Rowney, System 3 Sky Flow
Flat 2", 11/2", 1", ¾"

Support
Canvas: 60x50cm
Pot of water
Mixing tray

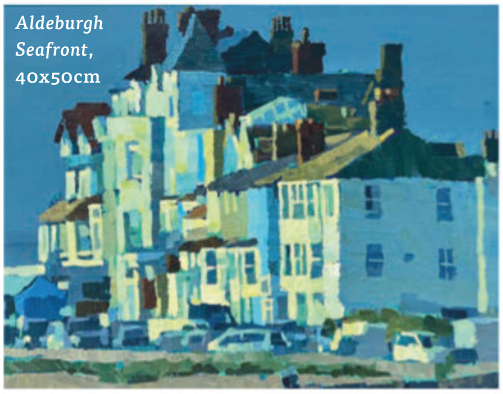
Extremes in dark and light are effective tools in creating punchy focal points. I have painted lots of sunny, acrylic street scenes – mainly backlit – and really enjoyed dabbing in the sparkly highlights on heads and shoulders, cars, buses and street furniture. They worked well because the backgrounds were dark, covering relatively large areas. The highlights created little stepping stones of interest, leading to larger pockets of light that enveloped the road or went to an open sky. The effect of light cutting through darks can really focus the eye with less obsessing in unimportant areas.

The secret is to play up light in the focal points so they really crackle and play down the other highlights. You can also enhance the darks by using small quantities of black mixed with your dark colours. If you need a calmer effect, use mainly mid-tones with less darks to contrast against the lights.

Generally, beginners are more adept at dealing with tonal contrasts, so it's a good exercise to get started. I recommend using an artist quality Titanium White, because it's the most opaque. In general, light colours of student grade acrylic require more layers, which can lead to overworking. With both student and artist qualities, use acrylics neat with very little water, as this helps lift the pigment and foster positive mark-making. When using acrylics, the crisp light and dark shadows work particularly well, as the quick drying time cuts out excessive blending and marks are more definitive.

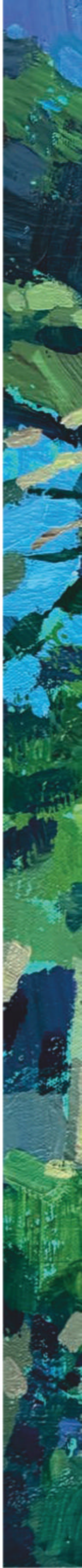
When it comes to colour, you could add a certain amount of yellow to light mixes – I prefer Lemon for its zingy effects – or use cooler colours in the shaded parts. You could also substitute light and dark for colours, so red against blue or green next to orange. This way, you can heighten the saturation in the highly lit areas and dull down the colour as it moves away. We tend to see more painting of light coming from darks but you could try reversing the technique and use more lights than darks, as I did here in *Aldeburgh Seafront*.

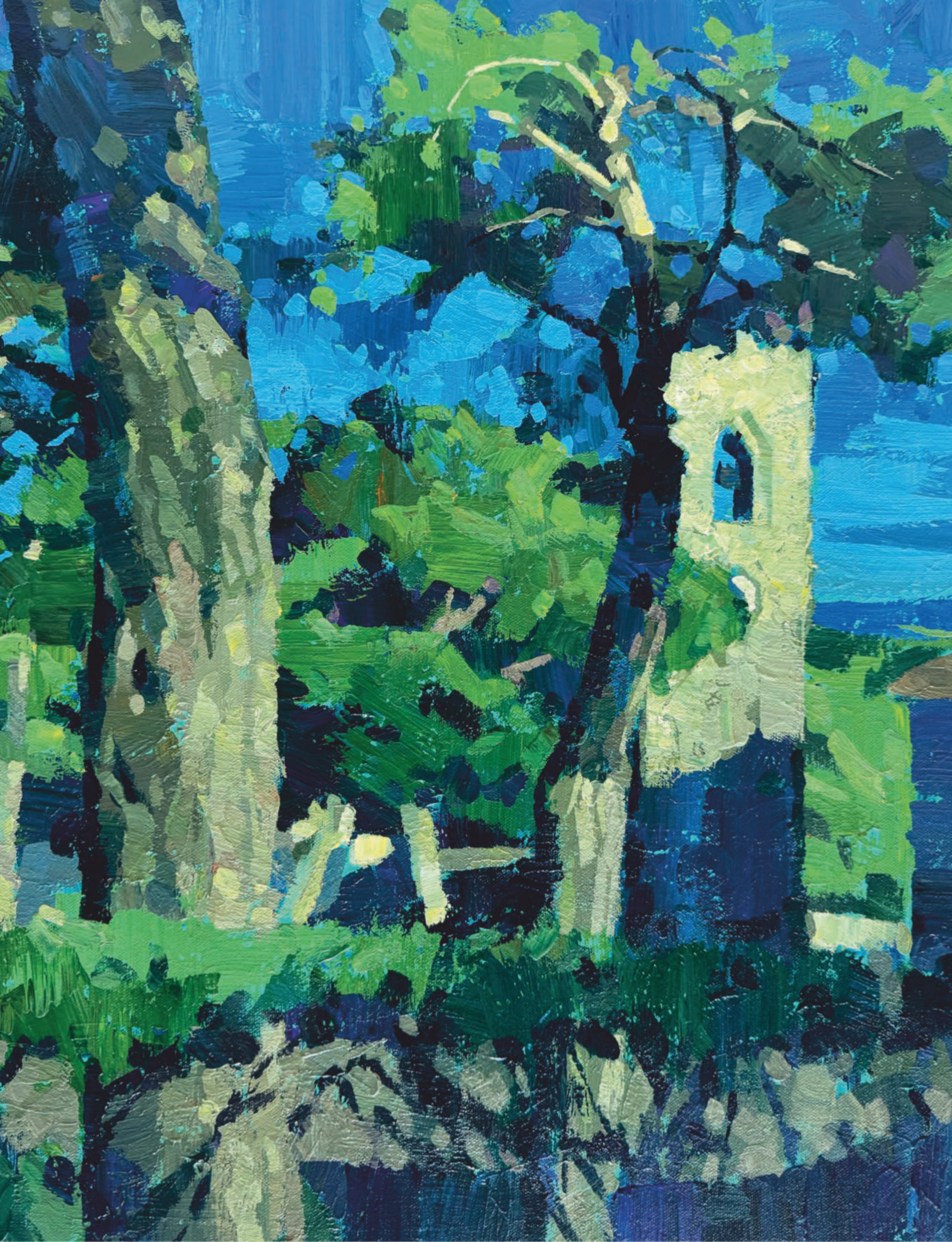
In this step-by-step, I'll show you how to build up darks and really punctuate your focal point with light. I'm using a couple of different brands of acrylic, including Liquitex and Vallejo. Remember acrylics dry darker, so allow a little drying time between some layers, especially at the end to really make the most of the final highlights. It may be helpful to do a little colour visual of the scene beforehand, this way you're more confident with the concept and know the steps ahead of time. ***hashimakib.co.uk*** ▸

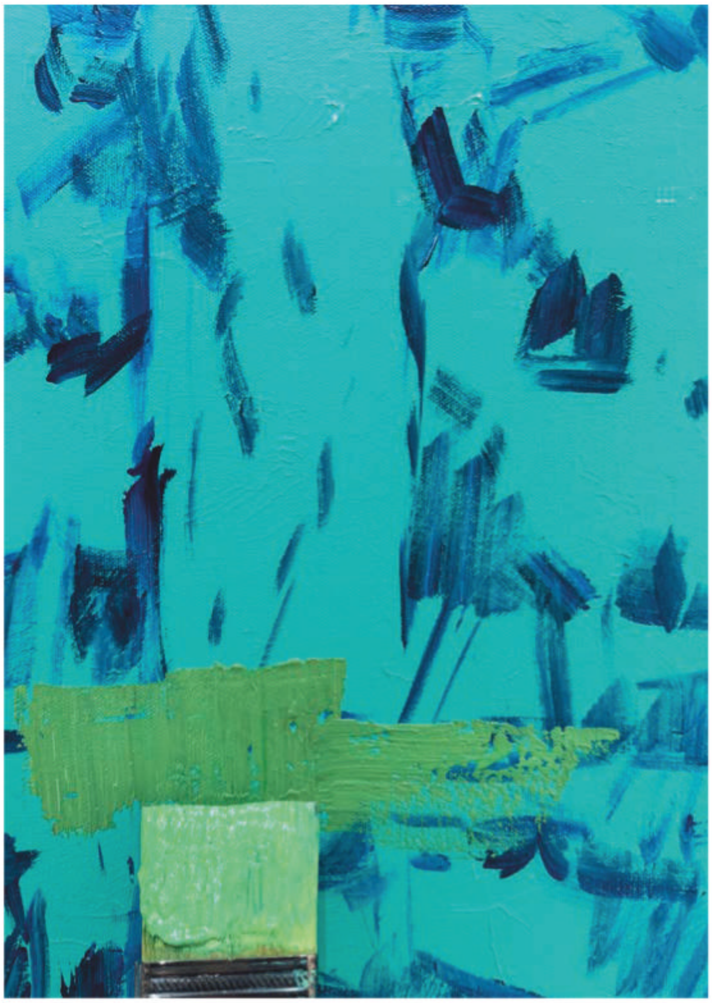


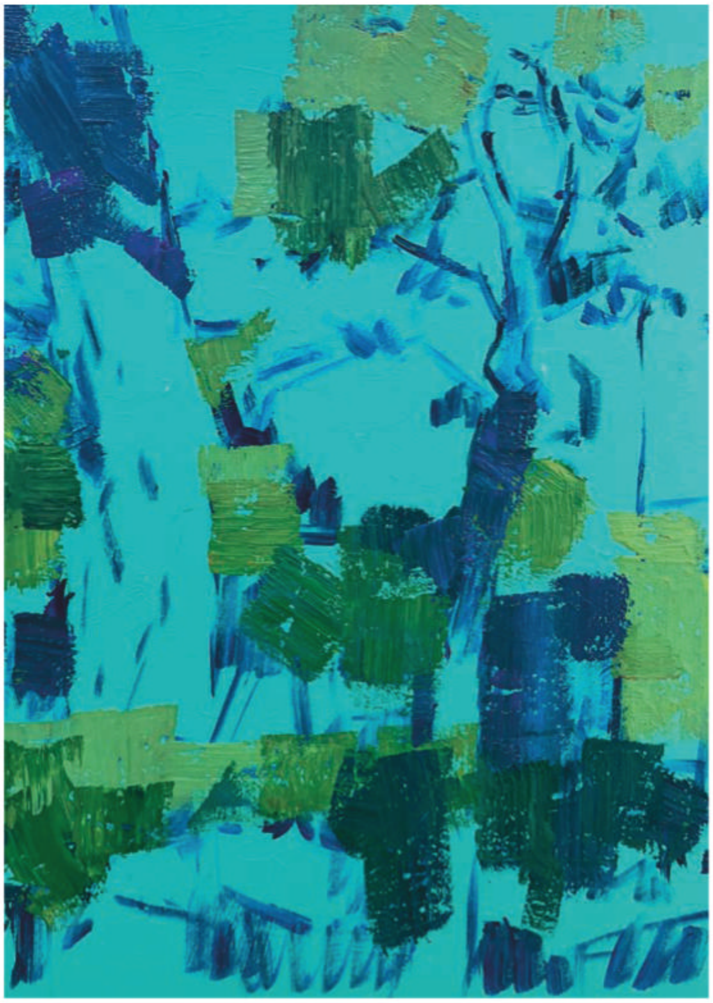
Aldeburgh Seafront, 40x50cm

For this painting the mid-section is mainly highlights. The darkest tones are applied to the roofs and below for the shadows of the cars. The sky behind also helps frame the lights. I've added Lemon Yellow to the lights to create a zingy warmth and contrast next to the cool blues. More lights in your artwork does create an airy, less oppressive feel. When painting lights in acrylic, do remember that the paint dries darker so compensate by going lighter than you think. You could try the colour out on a separate support initially.







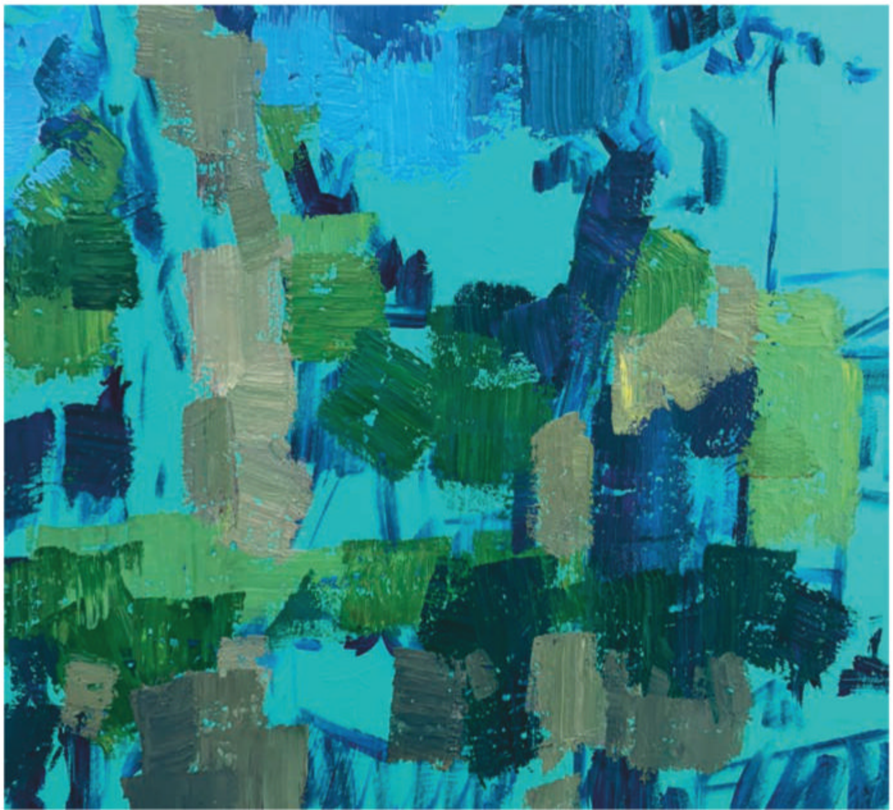


1 APPLY BLOCKS OF GREEN

I'm painting on a turquoise base colour mixed from Phthalo Blue and Phthalo Green with plenty of White. Once dry, I roughly sketch out the scene using my 3/4" flat brush with blue paint. Allow this to dry. I mix a light green using both greens, Yellow Ochre, Lemon Yellow, Sienna, Phthalo Blue and White, and apply large blocks using my 2" flat. I use paint fairly neat with a barely damp brush. The green is applied in different areas of the canvas to echo the colour.

2 VARY THE BRUSHSTROKES

Using the same brush, I mix a darker green by adding Phthalo Blue, Raw Sienna and Permanent Blue Violet. I also dip the brush in the light green on my mixing tray to create subtle blends. At this stage the applications are direct, almost one or two strokes, with the brushstrokes varying in direction. I do follow the drawing but I'm not too precious if the applications brush over the lines or I lose some of the drawing.



◀ 3 BUILD UP SUBTLE COLOURS

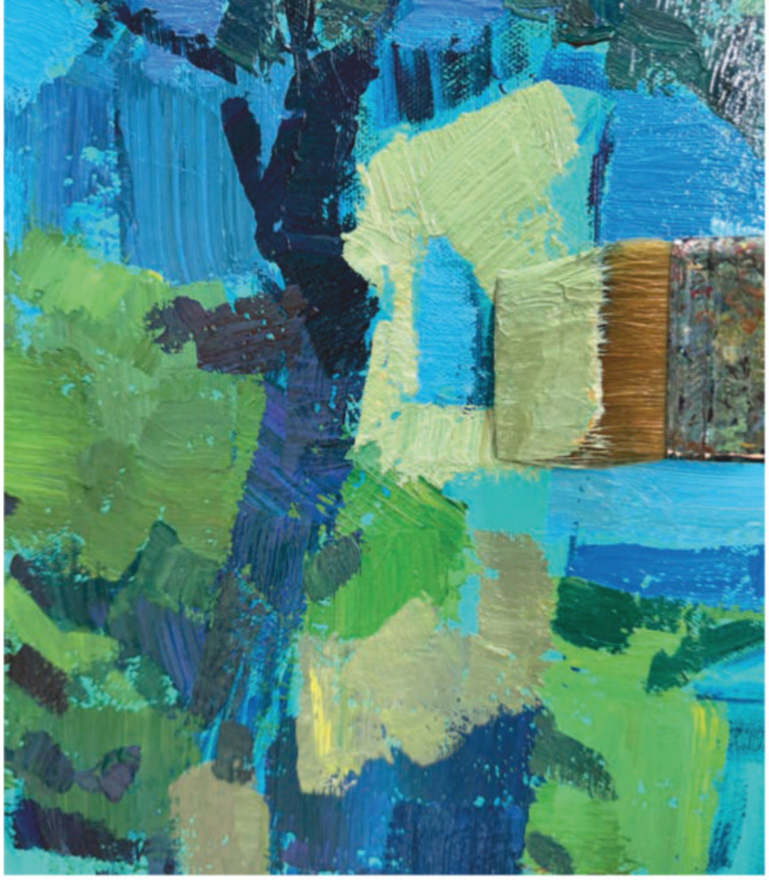
I make a new pool of colour on my mixing tray which will be used for the tree trunks and some surrounding elements. I use a clean, damp 2"Flat and mix an ochre grey from White, Raw Sienna, Lemon Yellow, Permanent Blue Violet, Sap Green and both blues. Again, I vary light and dark combinations with white although the tones will be relatively close. Look for subtlety in shades, build up gradually using large blocks.

4 THINK BIG AT THIS STAGE ▶

Look at the overall balance as you go and try to think big at the start when covering the canvas. A few darks are implied to gauge the tones – this is a mix of Prussian Blue, Phthalo Green and Raw Sienna. I'm still using a large flat brush which I occasionally angle for the tip to create some crisper lines. Avoid the temptation to fuss or overly finish anything. ▸

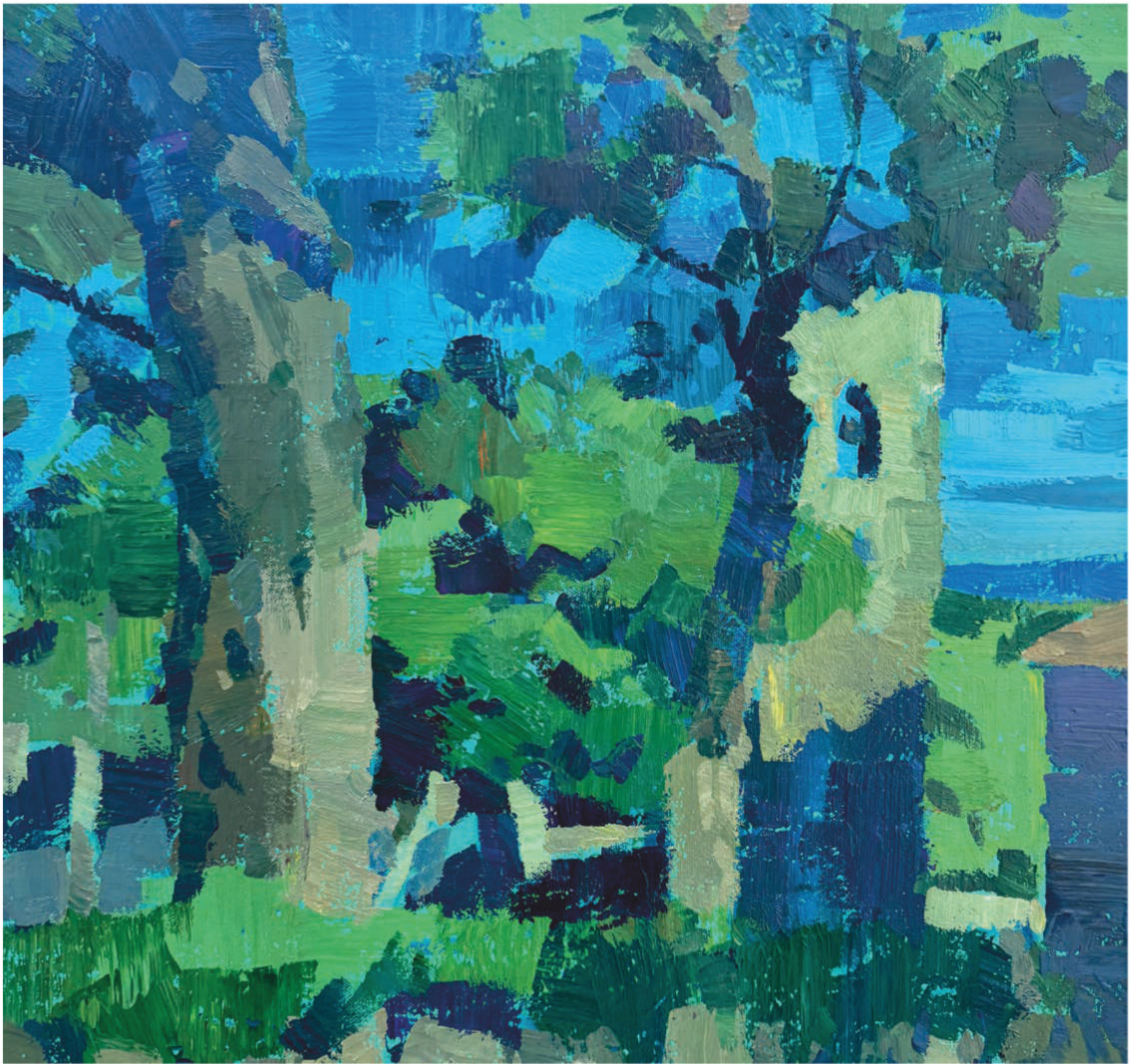
5 FINISH FILLING IN ▶

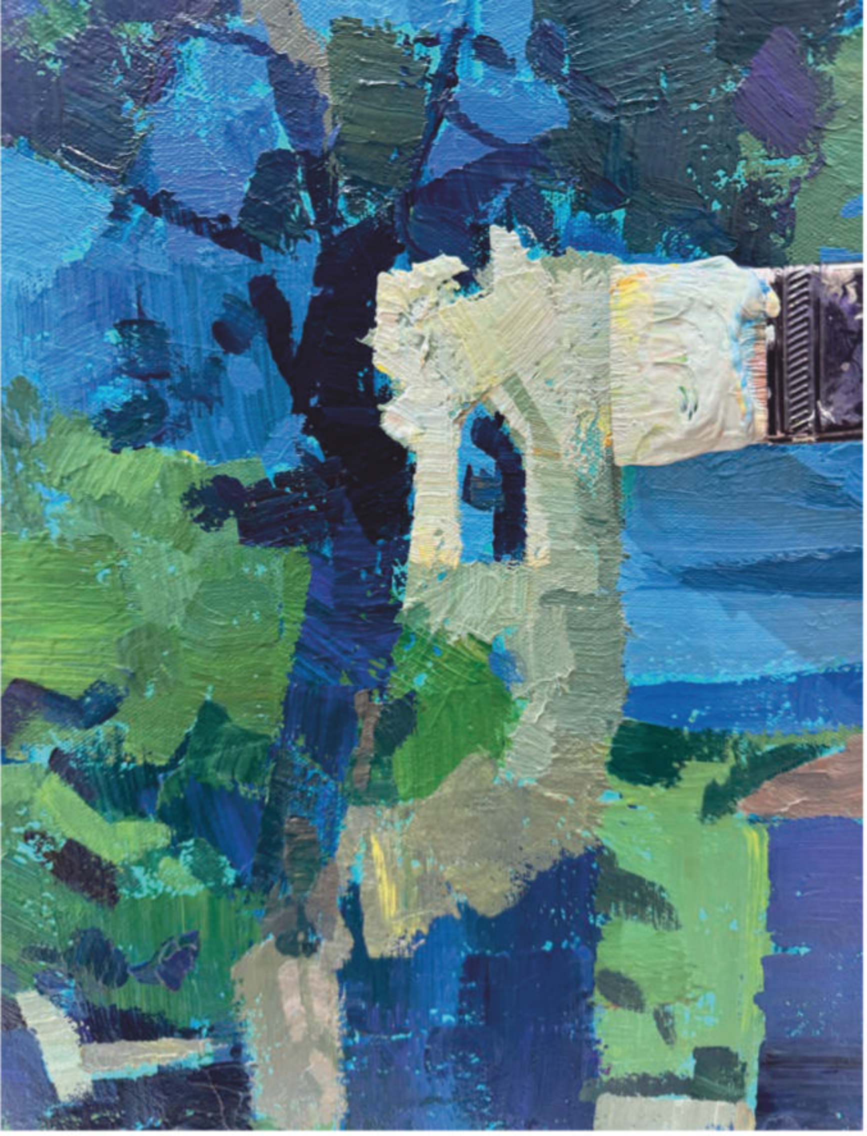
A light cream is mixed for the tower which will be the most highlighted area. This is a combination of plenty of White, the greens, Lemon Yellow, Yellow Ochre, Raw Sienna and Permanent Blue Violet. The top part near the arch is the most lit and I'll gradually subdue the strength to a duller light below. Again, using a 2" brush, large applications are used to quickly indicate the larger shapes. But the brush size is dependent on the size of your support, so you can use a smaller brush if needed.



6 LOOK FOR THE BALANCE ▼

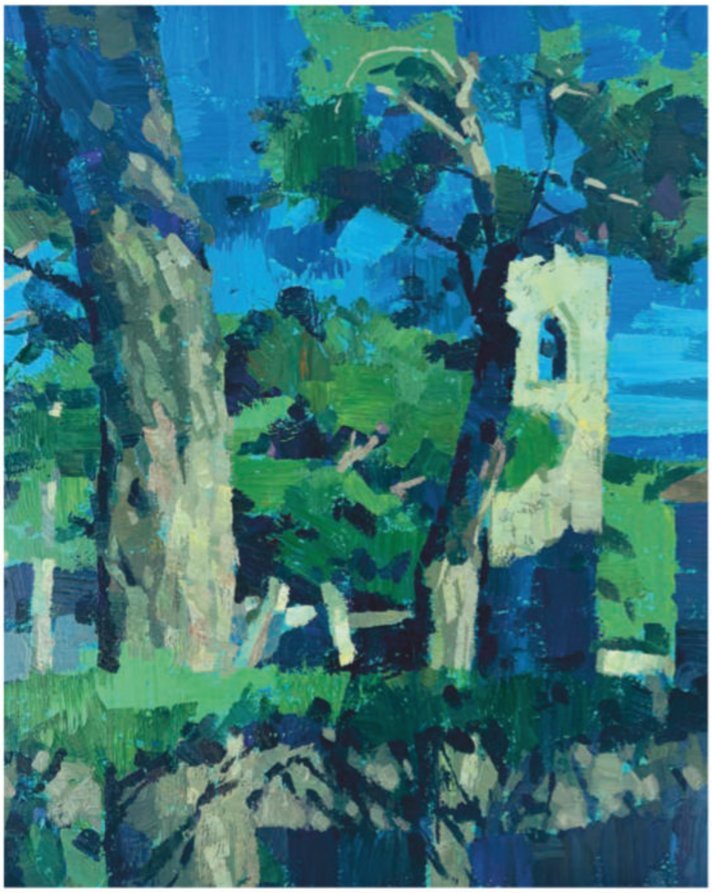
Once everything is filled, I have a good idea of the balance and where I can pinpoint my most effective darks and lights. It's relatively important to remain disciplined and keep with bolder strokes to avoid too much fussing. It may also be wise to allow these layers to dry before embarking on the defining stages. If you make a mistake it can easily be wiped away with a damp tissue.





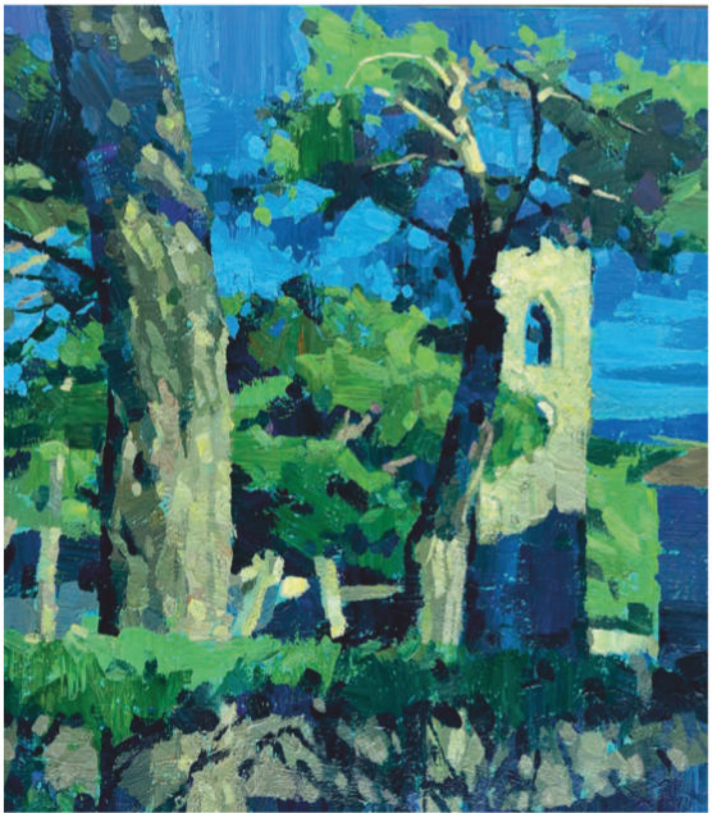
7 TACKLE THE TOWER

Using a clean 2" flat brush, I mix my lightest colour so far with plenty of White and more of the yellows into the creamy colour from earlier. The paint is nice and thick and is applied to the tower, but I'm careful to paint around the arch and leave some of the previous colour for subtle shadows. Again, this tint will slightly darken as I move away. If needed, I also use a 1½" brush to paint around awkward elements.



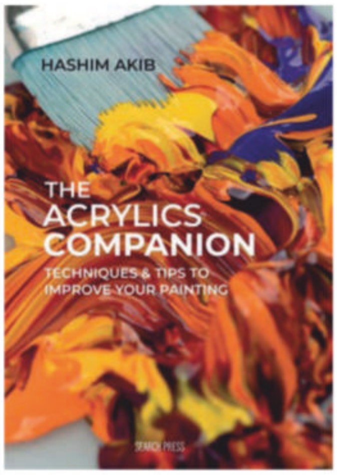
8 DEFINE SHAPES WITH STRONGER DARKS

I now have my punctuated focal point with additional stepping stones of light, such as the tree trunks and branches. I spend some time refining areas in the painting which can be time consuming but I'm careful to not draw the attention away from the tower. Stronger darks begin to define the shapes; this is my previous mix of Prussian Blue, Phthalo Blue, Phthalo Green and a little Raw Sienna. I use my smallest brushes at this stage.



9 POLISH THE FINISHED PIECE

I lighten the tree tops and spark some richer highlights around the arch. The sky around the trees contains some richer blues which help clarify the overhanging leaves. Some of the darker lines are teased forward while the bark on the trunks has additional features. As an exercise take it to the level you want and see what works for you.



You can see more of my work at ***hashimakib.co.uk*** or grab my new book *The Acrylic Companion* published by Search Press ◻

Seeing red

ROYALTY-FREE IMAGE BY CLOVIS WOOD, FROM UNSPLASH.COM

Using just two *STABILO* pens, **PAUL WILSON** shows how to create this glorious stylised tiger

EVERYONE LOVES TIGERS. Beautiful silky-smooth fur patterns, a graceful and flowing walk, and a majestic air are just some of the reasons they're so admired by artists. Because they have such an iconic look, they're an ideal subject to draw with a bit of stylisation, and that's what I'm going to show you in this tutorial.

If you've never tried a limited palette before, I can tell you it's well worth a go. While I mainly draw with pastel pencils, with all those hundreds of colours available, I still limit my colours to around six, and that includes a black and white. I enjoy the way you can make pretty much any colour from a few simple crosshatches and the result is a much richer and more varied tone than if you were to use single colours. Besides, limitations can push you to discover something new, so, in this tutorial, we're going to set a limited palette.

stabilo.com/uk

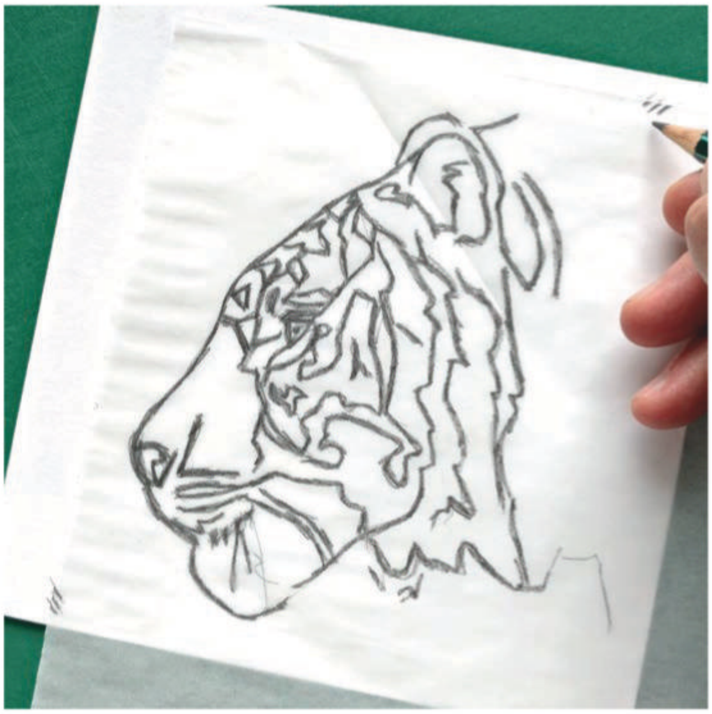
instagram.com/artbypmw facebook.com/artbypmw

PAUL'S MATERIALS

STABILO
Premium Fibre Tip
Pen 68, Red,
Fineliner point 88,
Black

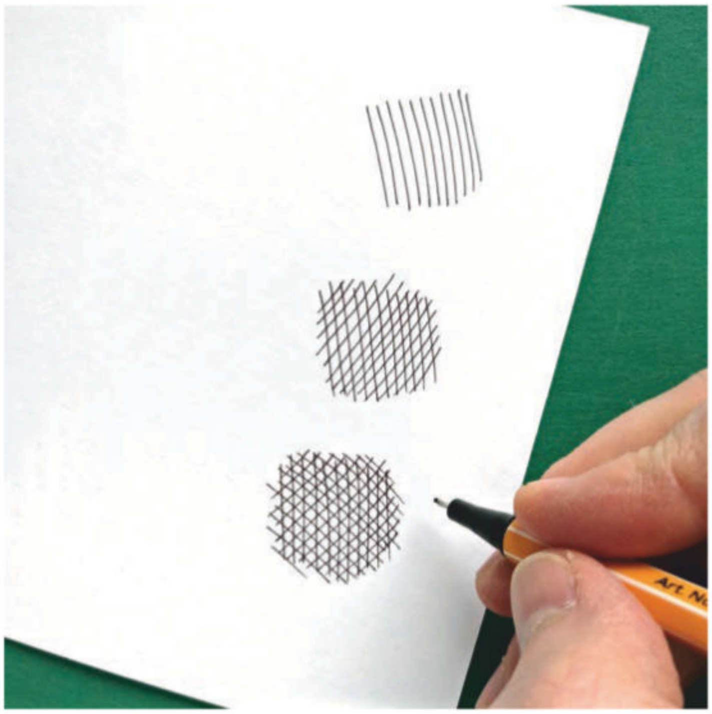
Small brush
Pencil
Tracing paper
(unless you're
feeling brave and
want to go straight
in without a
guideline)
Eraser

Artgecko
Watercolour Paper,
300gsm
(this has a great
smooth texture,
although anything
thick should work)



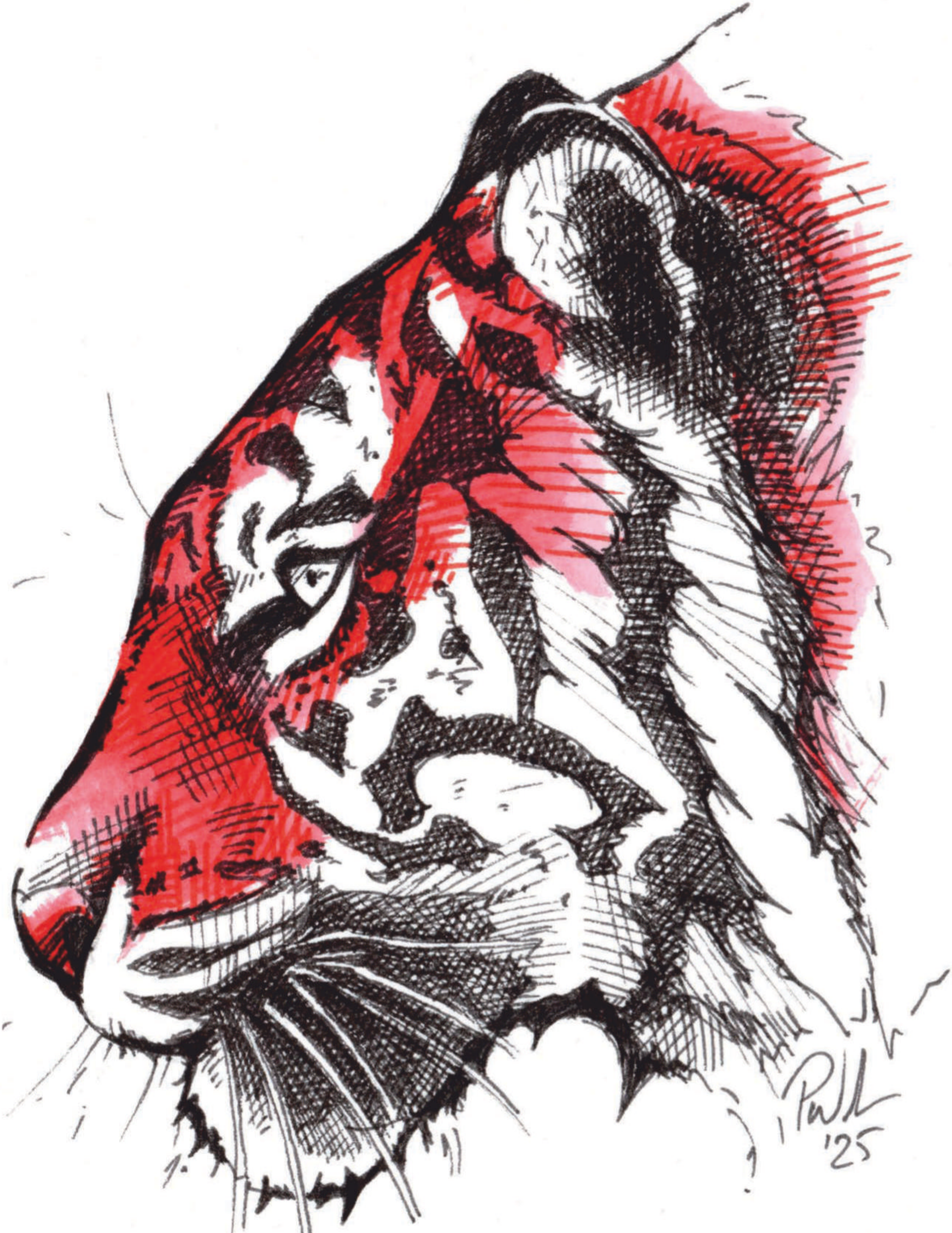
1 GET THE OUTLINE ON PAPER

Begin by tracing the reference and transferring it onto your paper. Of course, you can draw it traditionally if you like, but to speed things along I've done it this way for now. A good tip when transferring your image to the paper is to put three dashes along the edges as I've shown here, so that if you need to reapply any part of it, you can match those lines and get it spot on.



2 HAVE A GO AT CROSSHATCHING

Before we get to the main image, it's worth having a quick go at crosshatching. Try to keep the lines parallel as you draw them, and if you need to go darker (which you will) be sure to add the new lines at around 45 degrees rather than 90 otherwise you'll have a kind of 'grid' effect and it's not as interesting to look at. ▸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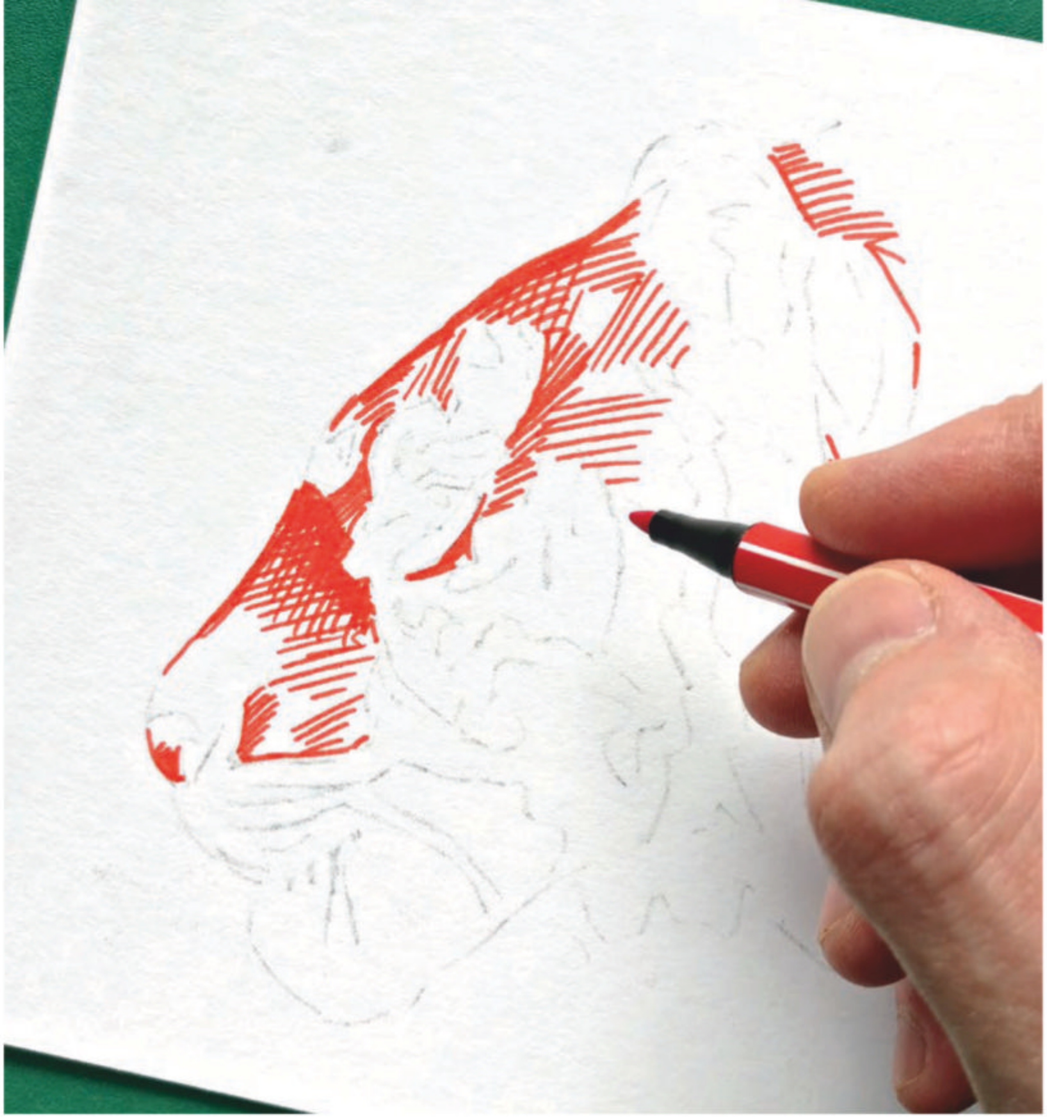
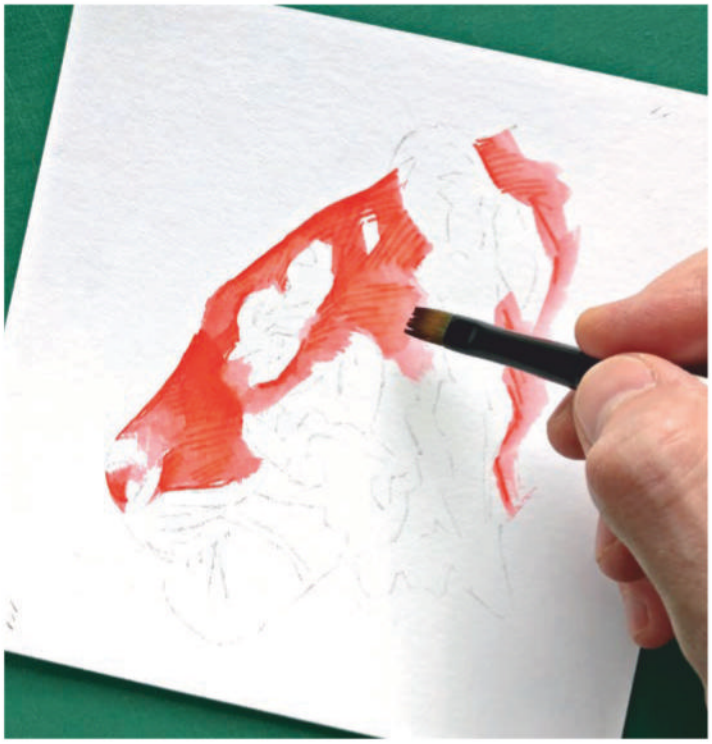
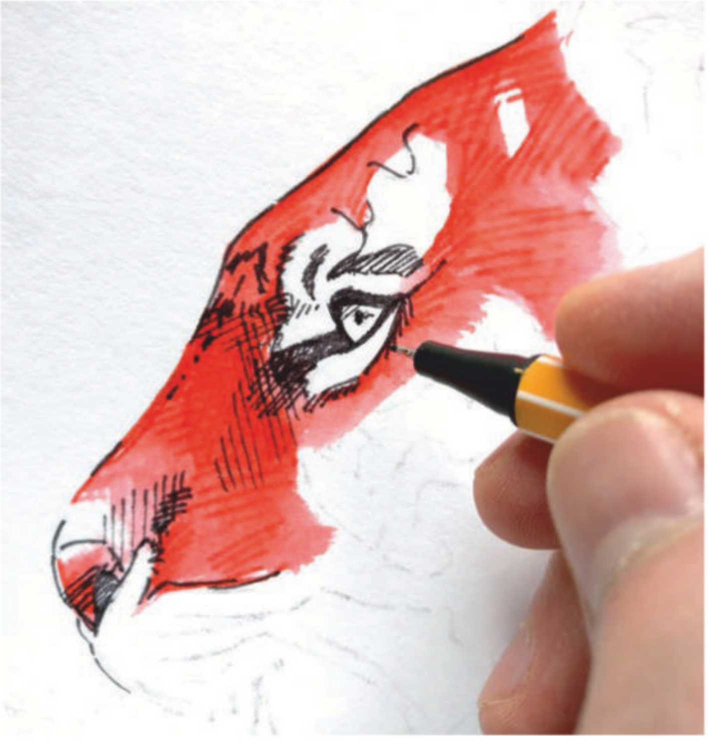


3 TACKLE THE ORANGE AREAS

Next, take your red pen and loosely crosshatch the orange areas of the tiger's fur. Don't be afraid of going a little more solid with some areas so we can get a really deep pigment for the next step. It might look a little rough at this stage, but don't worry, we're going to rectify that.



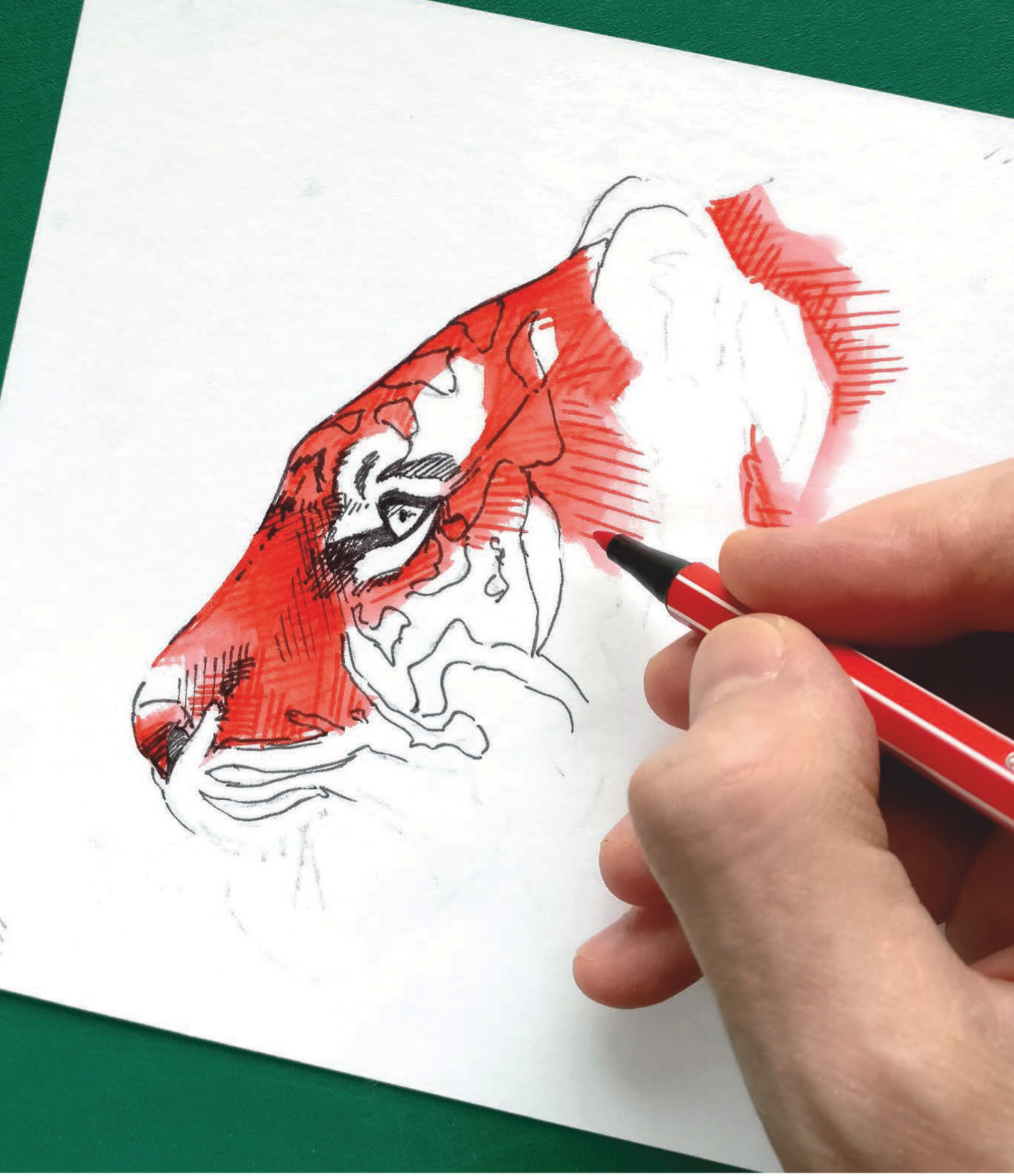


4 BLEND TO GET VARIATION IN TONE

Dampening your brush (I'm using an acrylic brush here, but it really doesn't matter too much), brush the pigment away from the edges towards the centre so you have a nice clean outline. We don't want a solid colour throughout so try to get a bit of variation in tone, that way we can add more red pen over it later.

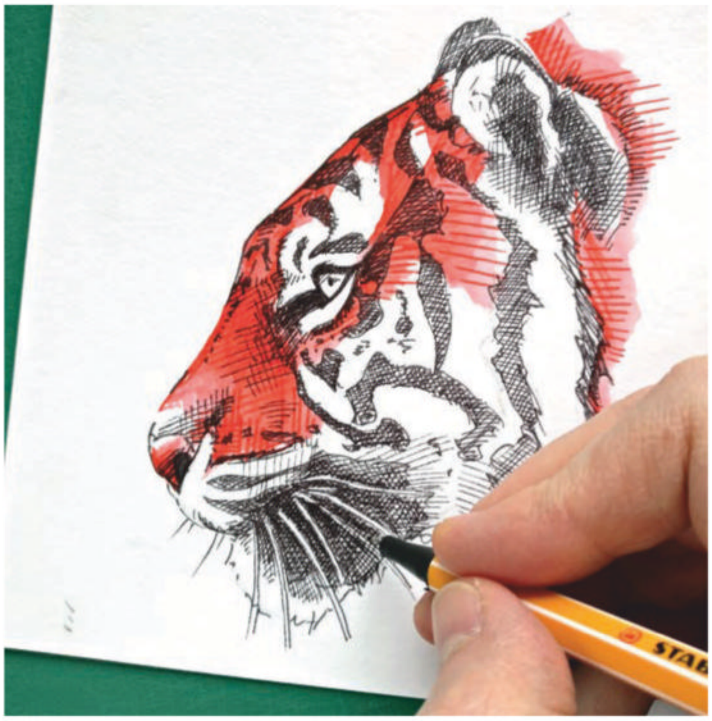
5 MOVE ON TO THE EYE

Now the important part: the details! I always start with the eye, because if you get that right then the rest of the picture should follow. Mess up the eye and there's nothing you can really do to fix the picture. No pressure, of course! With crosshatching, it's generally good practice to follow the direction of the fur and shape of the subject, but feel free to do it your own way. Really make sure the eye stands out with some solid black ink.



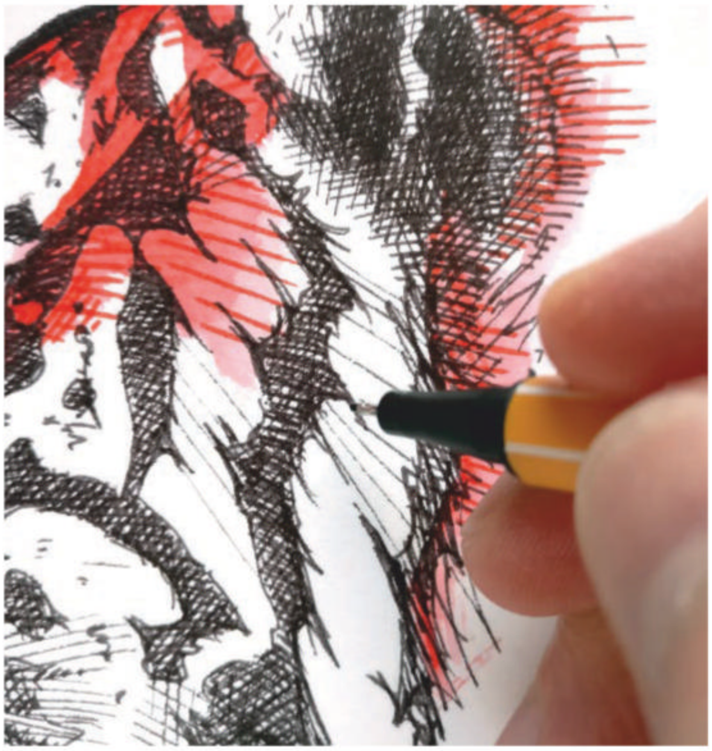
6 CROSSHATCH IN RED

Taking the red pen, add some crosshatches in the darker areas, again following the contour of the tiger's head. To help you decide where the darker parts of the red should be, try squinting your eyes at the reference image and you should see where the shadow sections are. If it's white, leave it white! ▶



7 TWO OPTIONS WITH THE WHISKERS

The trickiest part is the black surrounding the tiger's whiskers. There are a couple of ways you can do this; I opted to draw them out with the black pen before crosshatching around them, which gives them a looser feel, but you might like to try crosshatching the whole area first then painting them back in. Just remember that the ink is soluble, so test it on a separate piece of paper first.

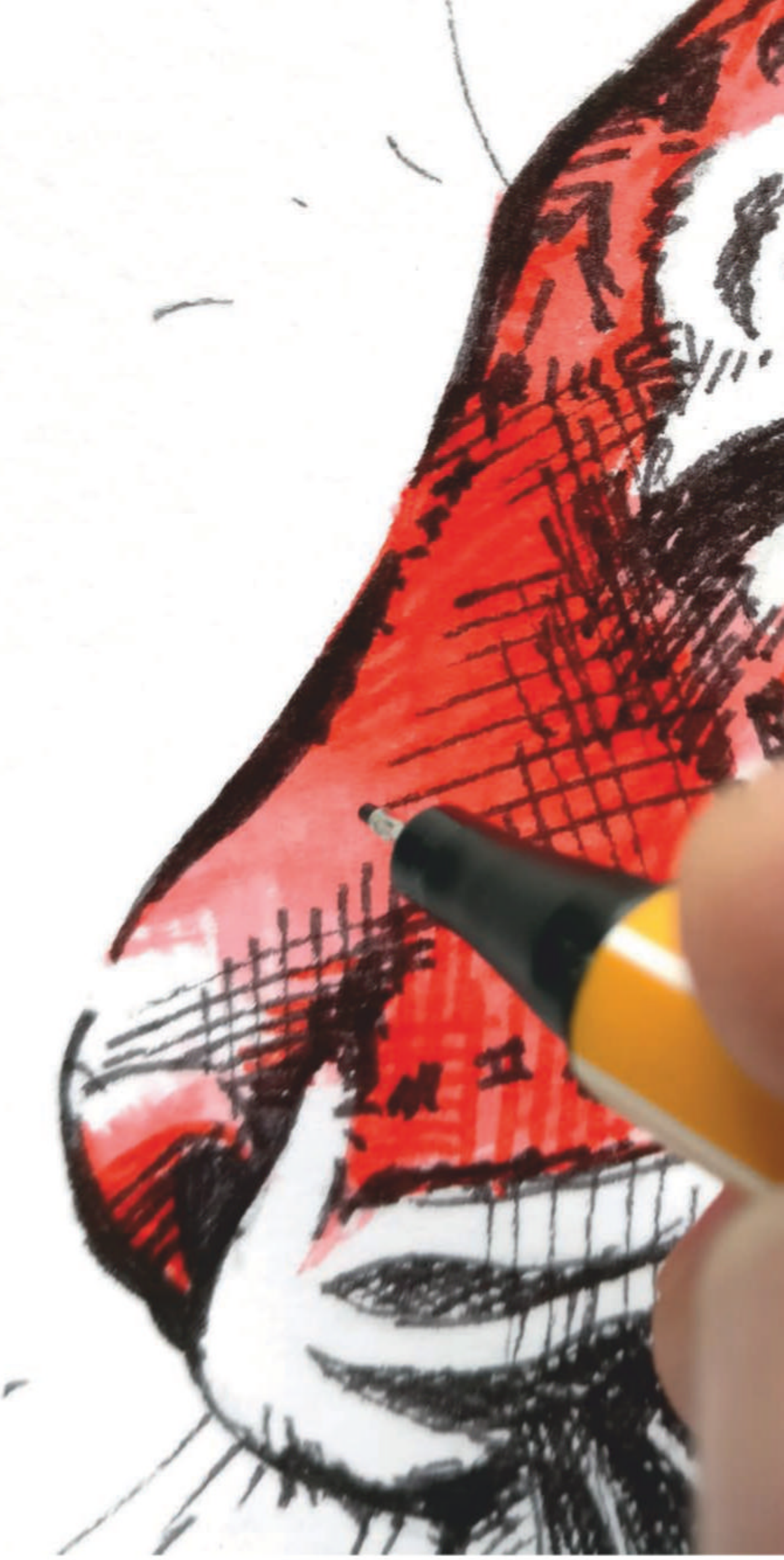


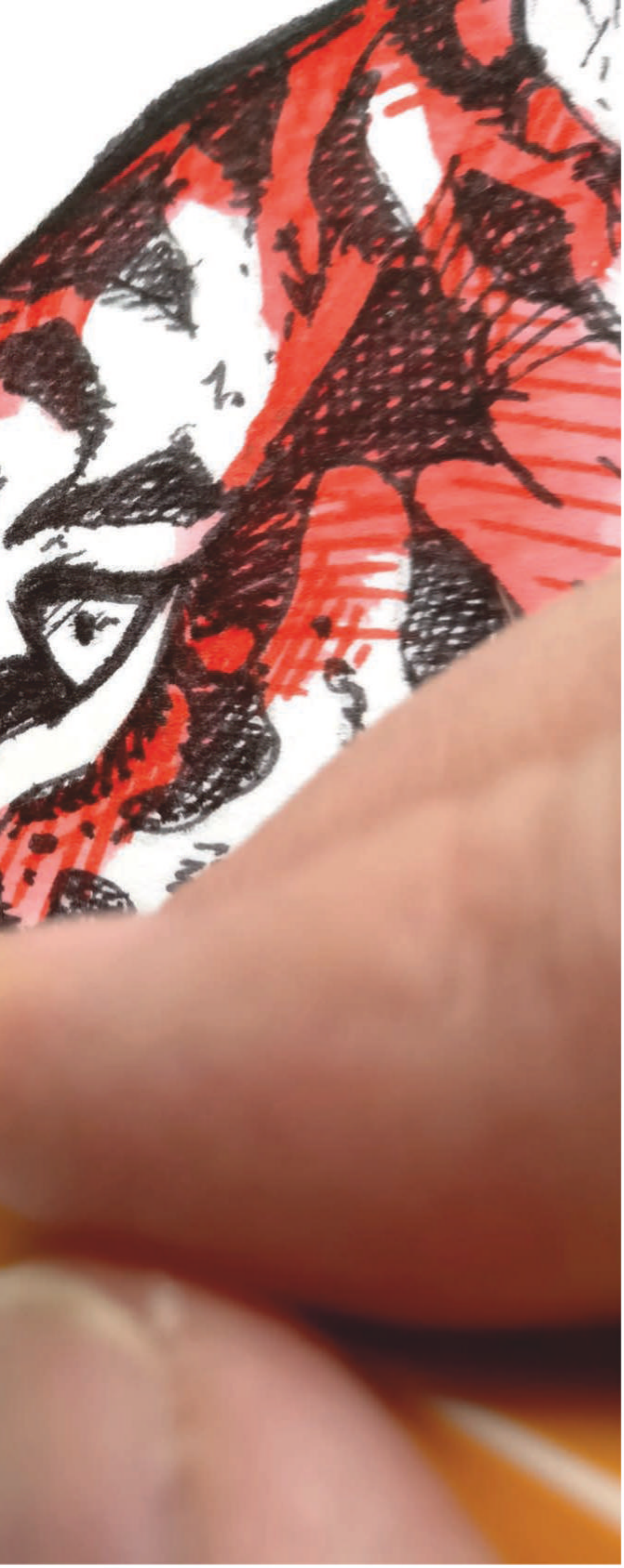
8 FINISHING TOUCHES

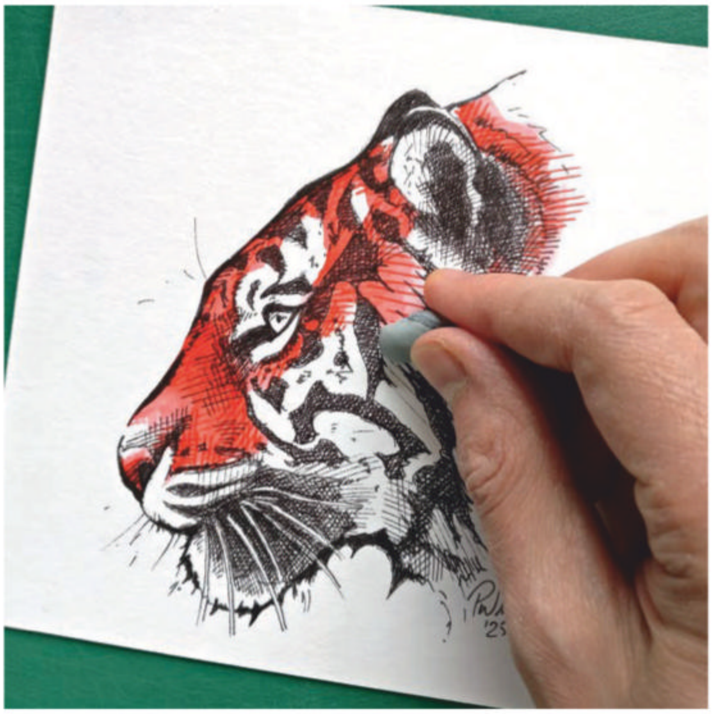
Adding some finishing touches to his fur, especially around his jawline, makes it look less like a solid block and more like the black parts overlap the white parts. Try adding the occasional dot or two, or maybe a squiggle here or there, just to break up the blank areas. Less is more: add too much and it will start to look a bit scruffy.

9 VARY THE OUTLINE

To really give this tiger some style, go around the outline of his head and thicken up the line quite a bit. Don't do it the same thickness all the way around, leave a bit of variation, and don't be afraid to leave gaps in the line, giving it a more sketchy feel.

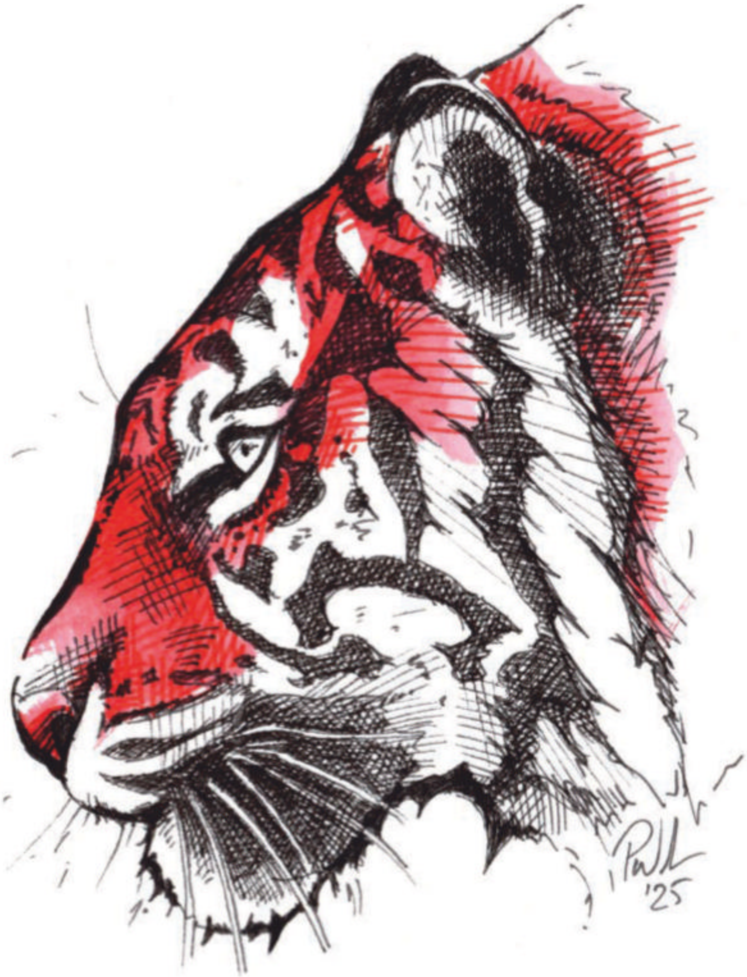






10 ERASE YOUR MARKERS

The final step is to erase your outlines and the three positioning markers in the corners, making sure your ink is dry before you do this. I use a putty eraser as it doesn't leave any rubber behind, although any eraser should work fine.



11 THE END RESULT

All done! Don't forget to sign your masterpiece! Why not try this technique for other animals? ◻

A misty landscape at dawn

Alla Prima Skies and Seas is a thorough guide to this exciting technique, whereby paint is applied quickly over previous washes and layers of pigment before it dries. In this exclusive extract, **MARK STOPFORTH** demonstrates how the technique can be used without a brush

MARK'S MATERIALS

Oil Paints
Prussian Blue, Yellow Ochre, Unbleached White, Burnt Umber, Titanium White, Kings Blue Light and Raw Umber (note: there aren't many paints used, as the piece is largely monochromatic, but the incidents and flecks of detail will break up the painting's surface and invite us in)

Support
A3 sheet of Fabriano (or good cartridge paper)
Masking tape
Kitchen towel
Gloves
Old paintbrush
White spirit (low odour)

> ***'The real subject of every painting is light.'***
>
> **CLAUDE MONET**

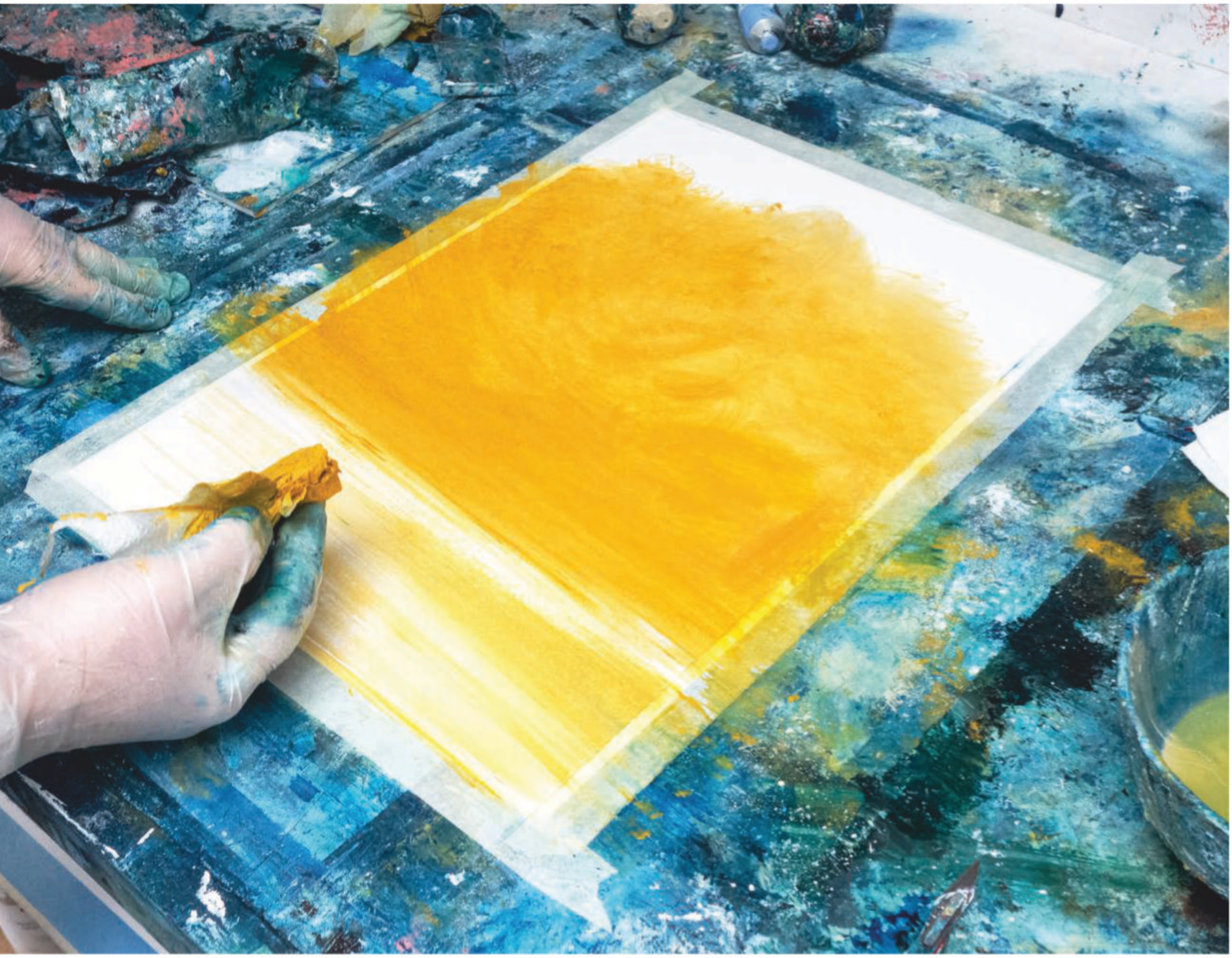
WHENEVER I'M PAINTING A PIECE, I am constantly appraising each movement, blend and nuance along the way. When you break it down, the number of decisions you're making will reach well into the thousands. The trick is not to overthink what you're doing and just respond to the paint and what it is doing or wants to do. This is a misty scene, reminiscent of those you find on a winter's morning on fell, fen and moor. The light is from above or slightly to one side and will have a diffuse glow to it. The foreground will contrast with the light, ethereal atmosphere in the air but will hint at patches of light to the left and right; the horizon will fall away into the mist, adding to the atmosphere we seek. There will be a subtle suggestion of a cloud line, which falls back into the blue-grey air. I don't work from photos or *en plein air*. If you wish to do either, that is entirely your choice and indeed may become a possibility for future paintings. I understand why artists want to go out and suffer the vagaries of the UK climate, but it's not for me: I get frustrated enough in the studio, when all there is by way of distraction is a dreaming dog on the floor chasing rabbits. For me, it's about memories and emotions that come from being in a landscape or in witnessing a storm rolling across the sky; anything that gives you a sense of awe and wonder in the world is always a good starting point. ***markstopforth.co.uk*** ▸

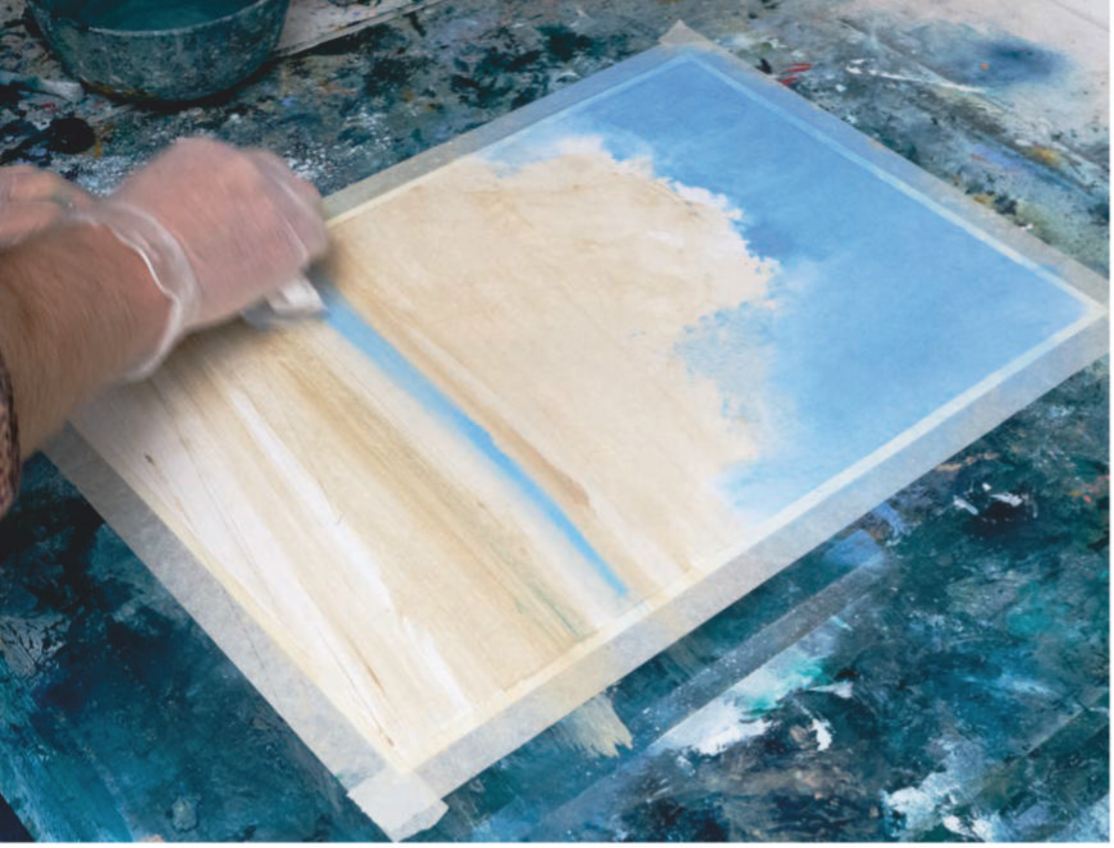
1 MASKING

Tape your paper down in a portrait orientation, with a 3–4mm edge. This is not essential, but when lifted it will give a nice clean border to your piece. You can get some very satisfying bleeds under the tape, which I have on occasion left exposed when framing, probably much to the framer's chagrin. Taping down only the corners leaves unresolved blank space.

2 SKETCHING OUT YOUR COMPOSITION

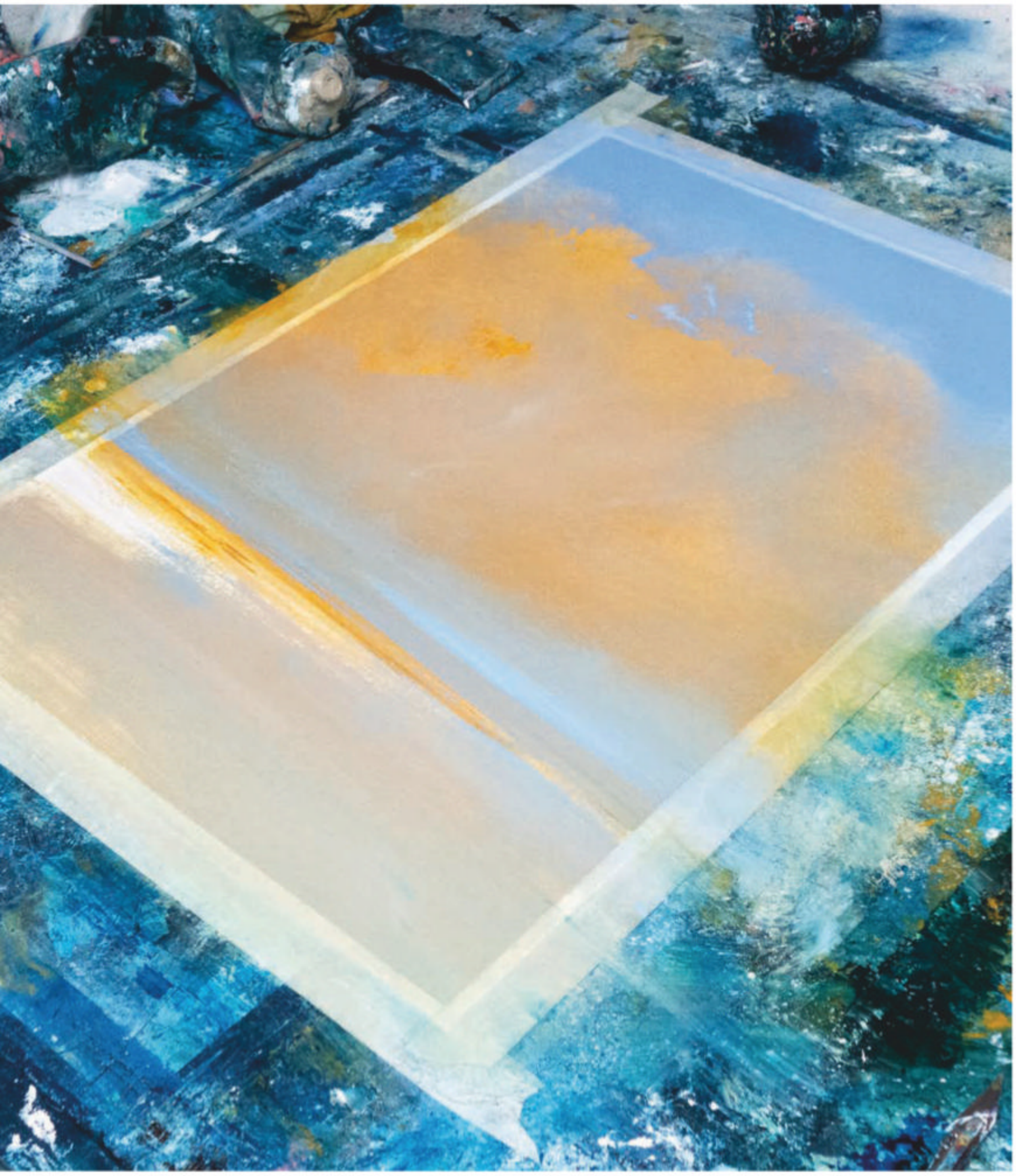
Drawing some quick guidelines with a pencil for the horizon is always a good thing to do. It should be somewhere between a third or a quarter of the way down the page. I often like to think I'm hitting the golden ratio but so long as the spacing looks harmonious and natural, you're moving in the right direction.





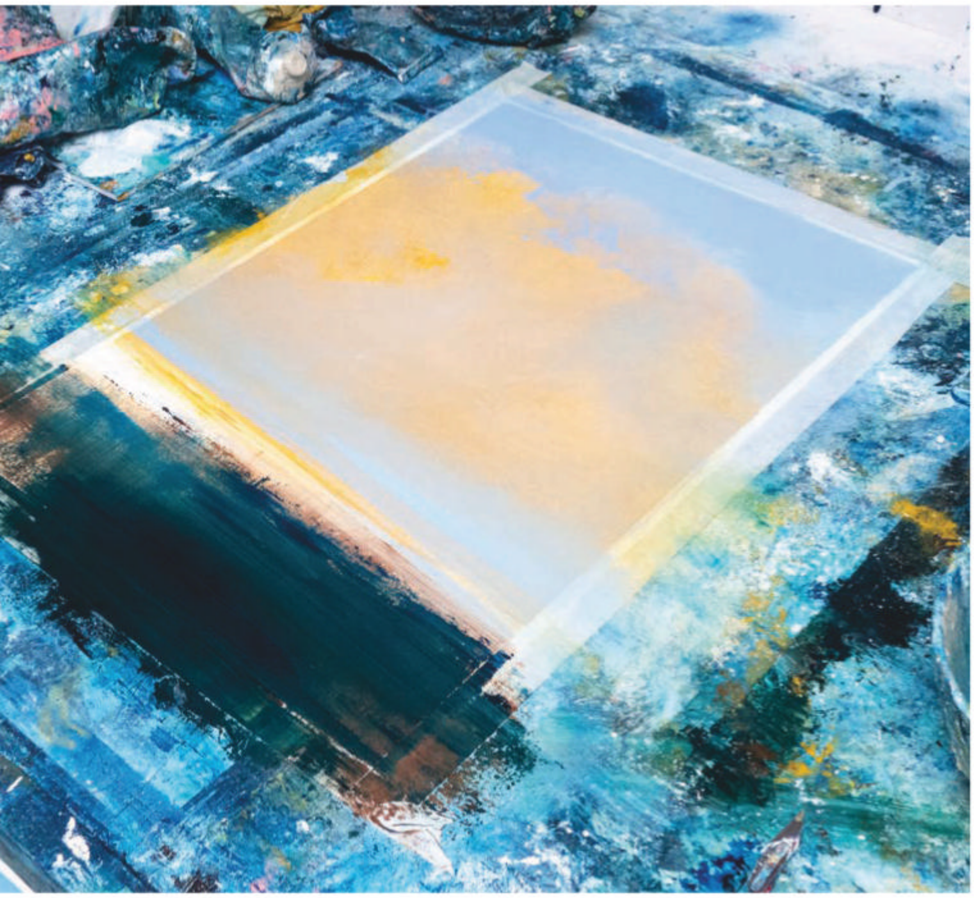
3 APPLYING THE FIRST WASH OF COLOUR

This stage is as important as the last, for this is the moment when you can plan out a very loose composition. You can describe the cloud forms you want to pursue, and the way the light falls on the horizon or pools at the bottom of the page or canvas. For skyscapes with a minimal landscape in the foreground, I veer towards Yellow Ochre on Unbleached White because it's sharper and brighter and will give you great definitions in line and light, as well as covering a large surface area quickly. Unbleached White gives a softer base colour to work on but can come through nicely as the painting progresses, revealing areas of light that look natural and can add contrast to your work.



4 STARTING YOUR BLENDS

The first blend you can try is using the Kings Blue Light pigment, a nice sky-blue tone. Placing a small blob on the kitchen towel at your fingertips, carefully dip the pigment quickly into the white spirit and apply at the top of the painting. The other method is to apply the paint dry to the top of the paper, then add white spirit. You can then draw this colour down into the Yellow Ochre. Please note that if you try to cover all the area with the blue on top of the Yellow Ochre, it will go a sludgy green, which you want to avoid. It's good to go over the edge and start to pick out cloud edges. I enjoy this part of the process as you can get some nice, feathered edges as well as a feeling of darker tones to consider later. It's also a good idea to use some of the Kings Blue Light just above the horizon, which will give some depth to the sky and create an early sense of push and pull to the painting. Push and pull describes how some of the work seems closer to the eye, while other areas fall away. When applying each colour, you must recognise when to change kitchen towel or switch it in your hand to find a clean surface. Now you will have some Unbleached White mixing with some of the Kings Blue Light, which was sitting on the Yellow Ochre. Pull the paint up and away from the horizon, being careful not to pick up any of the Yellow Ochre already there. Note the colour change, which should start to feel slightly misty and wintry. ▶

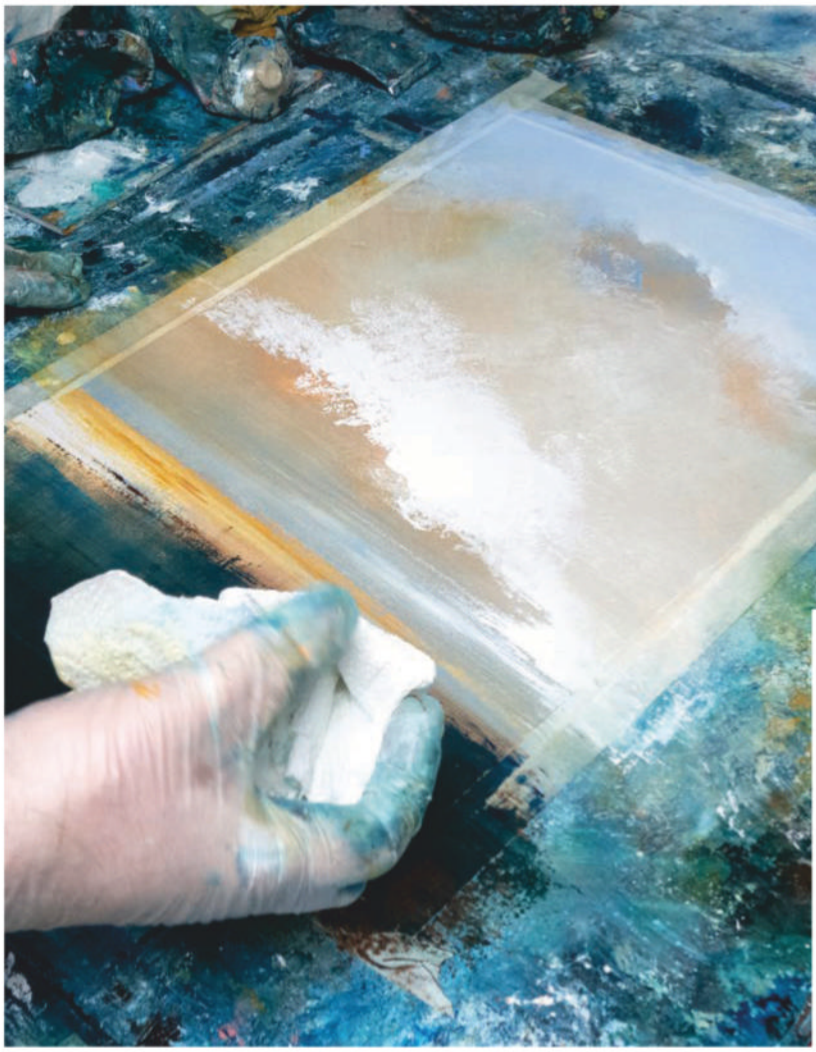


◀ 5 WORKING ON THE FOREGROUND

To create a bold statement within the painting we need to have a strong contrast between the sky and the landscape. The horizon line will fall further back into the picture plane, making it hard to see where the horizon ends and the sky begins. To do this we are going to introduce a Burnt Umber, which has a nice sense of warmth, and scumble the pigment across the lower section where the landscape should be. We are not considering anything like rolling hills, rivers meandering into the distance or stone built towns idly waking up to a new day. We are keeping it as simple as possible. Placing the pigment on a dry piece of towel, draw from right to left across the area of landscape just below the horizon. Look for any appealing lines or staccato marks that you may wish to leave. With a clean towel, try some drags down towards the bottom of the paper, using a soft touch. After dragging down, go across the landscape again from right to left and you may find some of the drag lines going down are partially hidden by those going across. This is a useful technique for creating reflections in still waters. You may also wish to use some Burnt Umber to darken the base of a cloud form; this will break up the large field of colour in the sky as well as make a connection between sky and ground. Don't overwork this part of the painting with the Burnt Umber. At this stage you want to see some of the Yellow Ochre wash still coming through and possibly some sections which have been left for light effects.

6 CREATING A CLOUD LINE ▶

For the final act, we are going to create a very subtle cloud line, which will look like it's peeking through the veil of mist. I would attempt this a little above the perceived horizon. There are two ways of doing this. Firstly, take a small amount of white pigment on the fingertip edge of your towel and draw with it into the area where you want the cloud's edge to be. I wouldn't go for a classical cumulonimbus here; I would just strive to create a fast edge of cloud, which you can then work up and away into the sky above, blending and fading as you go. You may wish to come under the cloud edge if it looks a little too sharp. You're looking to create a soft, hazy effect which is still misty by nature. The second way to do this is to take a thin paintbrush and create a cloud line, leaving enough white paint on the paper where you've painted the cloud line so you can draw the white away and up into the sky. The last thing you might want to try is a little stippling and spraying using an old paintbrush.



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Capture the moment

HELENA BOASE shows you how to deal with rapidly changing conditions when painting *en plein air*

IN MY OPINION, British summers are rather fantastic, especially when spent in a garden. Even if you're not naturally green-fingered, being a painter gives you a wonderful opportunity to enjoy and engage creatively with a garden. In this article, I'll run you through how I paint gardens *en plein air*: the difficulties, the key pieces of kit you need and the things to bear in mind.

The elements that attract us to gardens are often the very elements that can cause the painter considerable grief: flowers, different bushes, plants all various shades of green, changing light, fast-moving clouds... the list goes on. Unsurprisingly, the weather is the biggest consideration of all and means one must often work more quickly than is ideal to capture the general impression of a scene. While this can be frustrating, I find it helps keep a painting fresh and energetic.

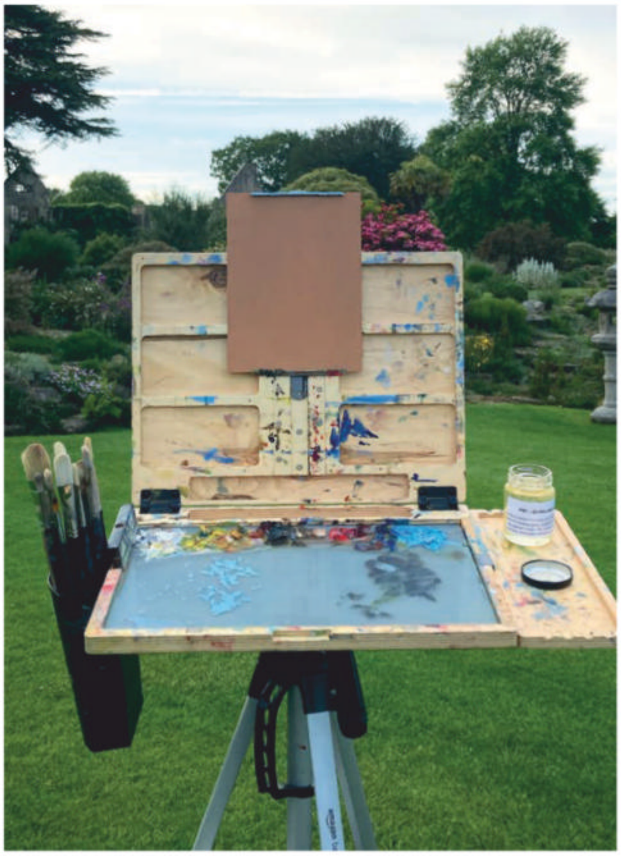
For this step-by-step, I'm showing the process of painting a garden scene from Nyman's House in West Sussex, a beautiful National Trust property with exceptional gardens. I was intrigued by the prospect of a composition that had architecture, trees and plants in it. The painting itself is small - only 6x8"- and I painted it as the summer sun was disappearing behind the horizon, forcing me to paint quickly, but also casting a purplish light over the scene.

helenaboase.com

HELENA'S MATERIALS

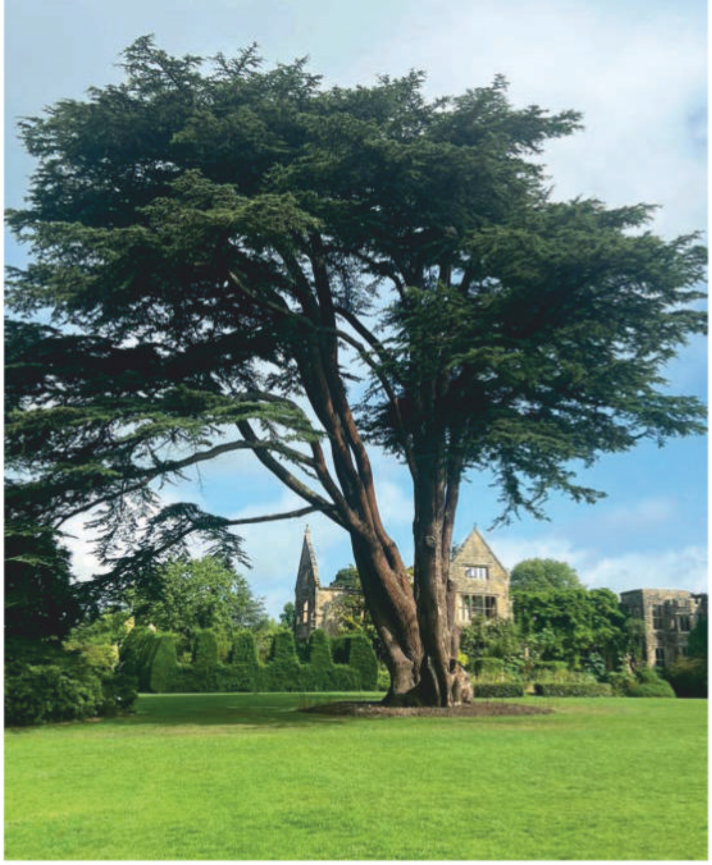
Oil paints:
Titanium White
Cadmium Yellow
Yellow Ochre
Venetian Red
Burnt Umber
Cadmium Red
Alizarin Crimson
Ultramarine Blue
Kings Blue

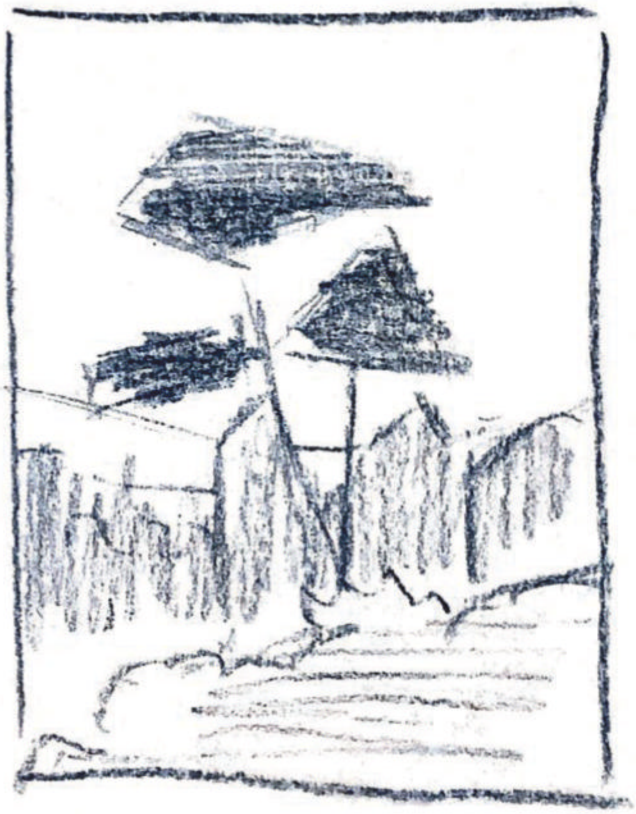
Support
Panels pre-primed with a Burnt Sienna and Titanium White mix
Pochade box
Tripod
Brush holder
Range of brushes: sizes 0 to 12, hog, sable or synthetic
Shelsolt (non toxic turpentine)
Linseed oil and turpentine mix
Brushwasher (filled with Shelsolt)
Tissue roll



1 PREPARE YOUR KIT

I have a New Wave pochade box which I attach to a basic tripod, essential if standing. If you're not fond of standing, you could easily place the box on a table or even in your lap. For this painting I only bought the essentials, having already squeezed my paints onto my palette. I also had a range of different-sized hand-primed panels, one of which I would choose, depending on my composition. When landscape painting, I find panels are much easier to carry than canvases and I actually prefer the feel of smaller primed MDF boards to linen or cotton. ▸



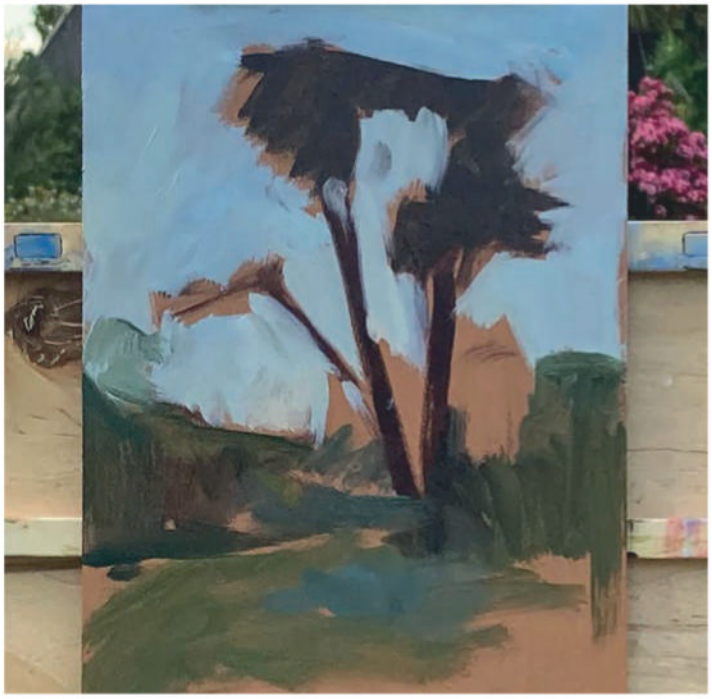


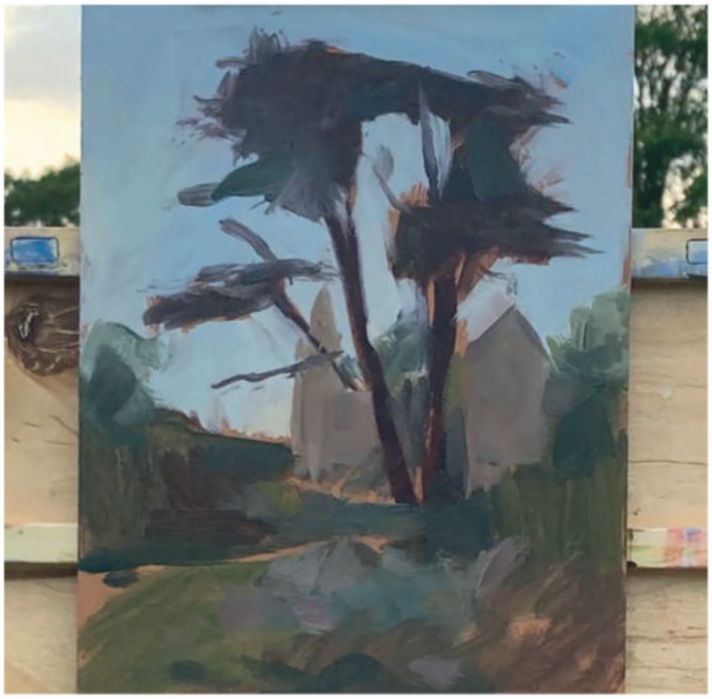
2 CAREFULLY CHOOSE YOUR SUBJECT

The ruins of the house and the large tree were to be my subject. Painting with the sun behind them did pose challenges, but it also simplified the shapes and values. I thought there was an interesting contrast between the shape of the tree, the straight lines of the ruin and the carefully curated wildness of the flower borders. When choosing a subject, it is worth considering where the light will be coming from. If you're interested in where the shadows will fall, type 'shadow map' into your search engine and you can find a map that shows you!

3 FIGURE OUT THE COMPOSITION

To do this, I made a few quick sketches of possible ideas (always bring a small sketchbook and pencil with you). In the end, I chose a portrait composition, with the tree and house as my focus, with a clear foreground, middle ground and background. Think about the rough areas of light and dark in your composition – these will impact the balance of your work.



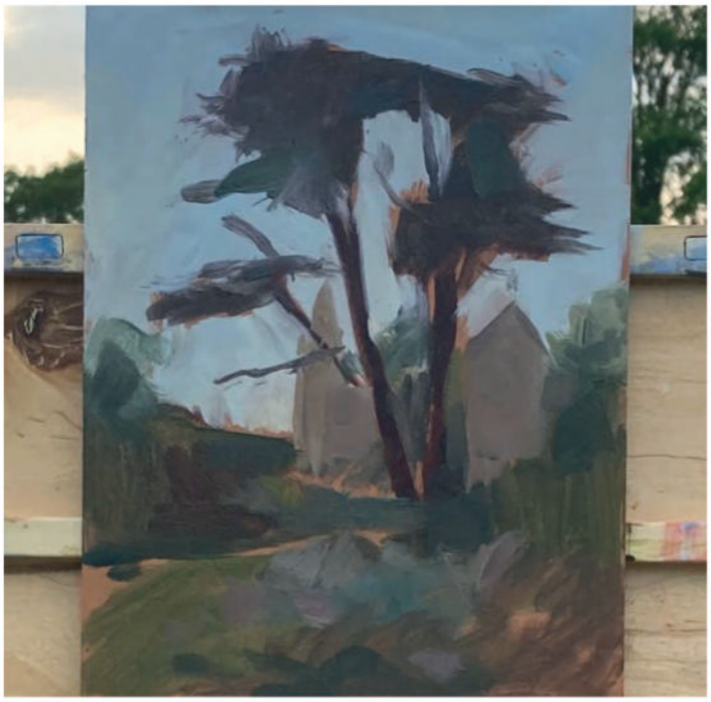


6 START BLOCKING IN

Using my premixed colours, I blocked in the basic shapes. Squinting is very helpful here – it simplifies the areas of light and dark, and simplification is key to blocking in! For this stage, it's best to use your medium to larger brushes so that you can cover areas more quickly.

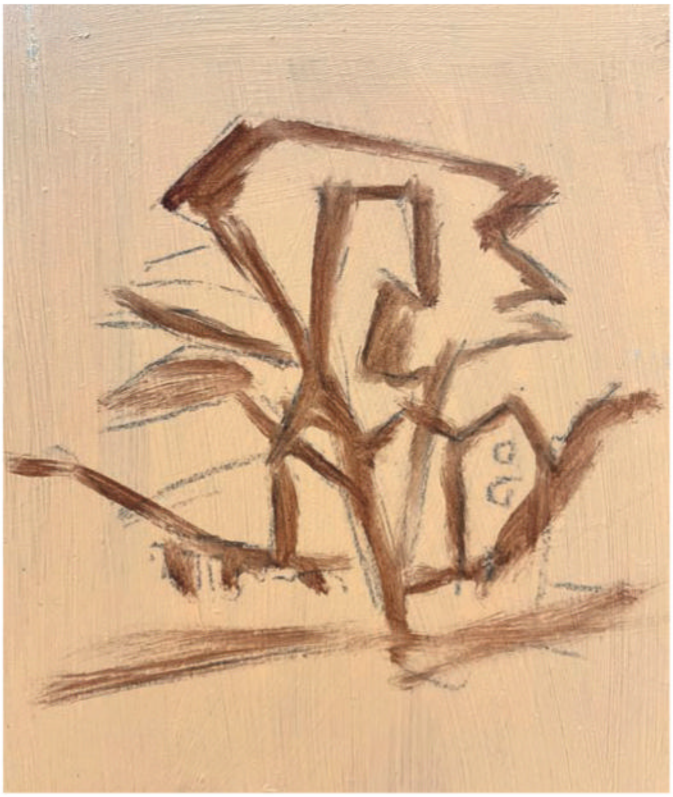
7 BUILDING IT UP

You can now have fun adding other colours than the ones you premixed: dark and light accents. Small details like flowers and grasses are best put in at this stage, but make sure you're getting the values right. You can use your phone as a black mirror – turn it off then hold it up to your eye, turning it until you can see both your subject and painting in the reflection. This simplifies the values before you.



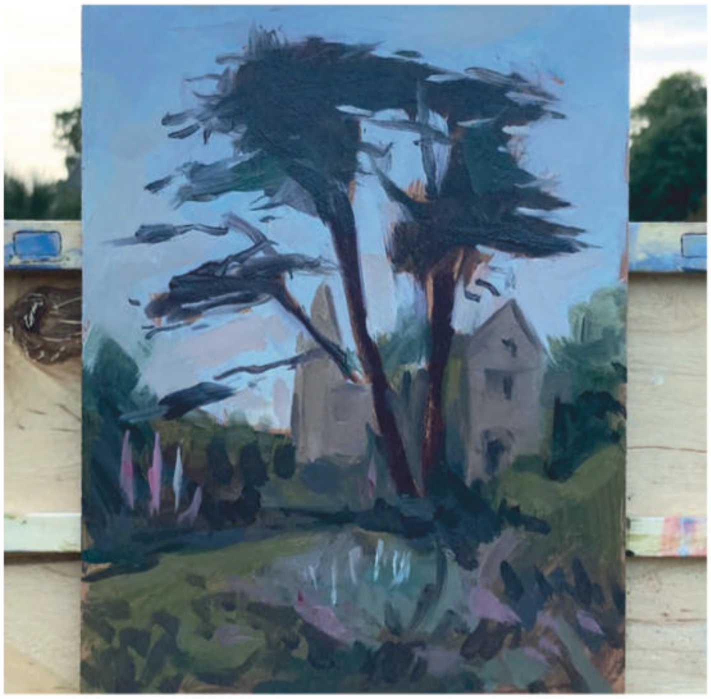
4 MIX YOUR COLOURS

Working quickly as the light was fading, I mixed up some piles of colour on my palette, so I wouldn't have to chase the colours as they changed with the light. When painting *en plein air*, it's good practice to mix a general sky value, then the general mid-tones and darks. It helps to mentally separate the painting into blocks: in this instance a general mid-green for the grass, a darker green and a mid-tone for the building. Premixing different greens is vital when painting gardens, to stop your painting getting muddy and confused.



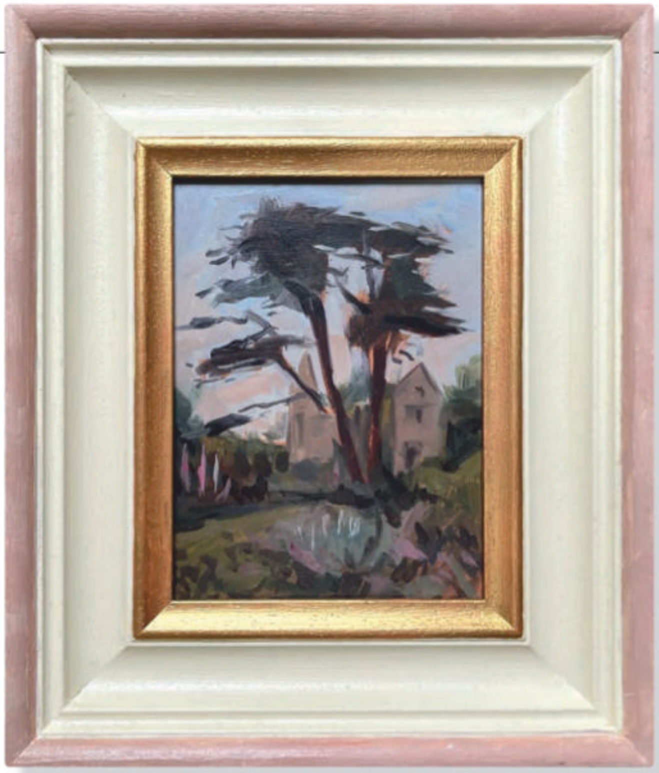
5 NOW FOR THE UNDERPAINTING

For this I used Alizarin Crimson with a bit of Burnt Umber to draw, on top of a panel pre-primed with a Burnt Sienna and Titanium White mix. A Burnt Sienna mix is fantastic if you need to paint green or blue colours on top of it, and I find using Alizarin is helpful when capturing a scene at sunset which has slightly pinker colours.



8 ADDING FINISHING TOUCHES

You may want to do these at home or in your studio, especially if the light has changed dramatically. If so, it's often worth indicating these quickly on your painting, to refine at a later date. While I don't recommend working from photos, they can be helpful to reference particular elements later when you're back in your studio.



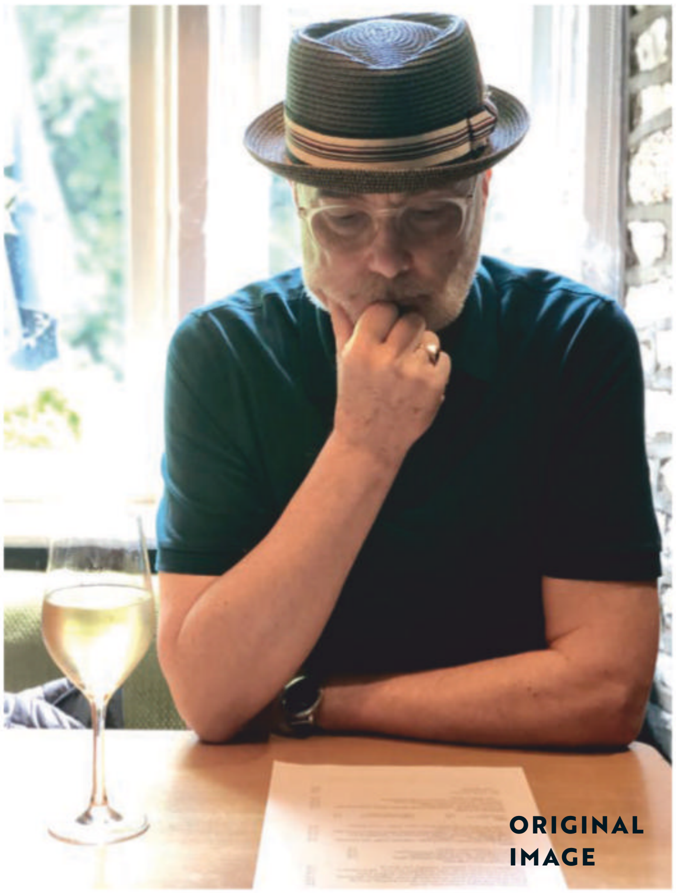
9 VARNISHING AND FRAMING

For me, one of the most satisfying parts of painting is framing the work. I like to paint my own frames so I can choose which colour would best complement the work. Here I've chosen a purplish pink to enhance the dusk colours of the painting itself - and to act as a reminder of the lovely glass of rosé I drank while painting it! ◻

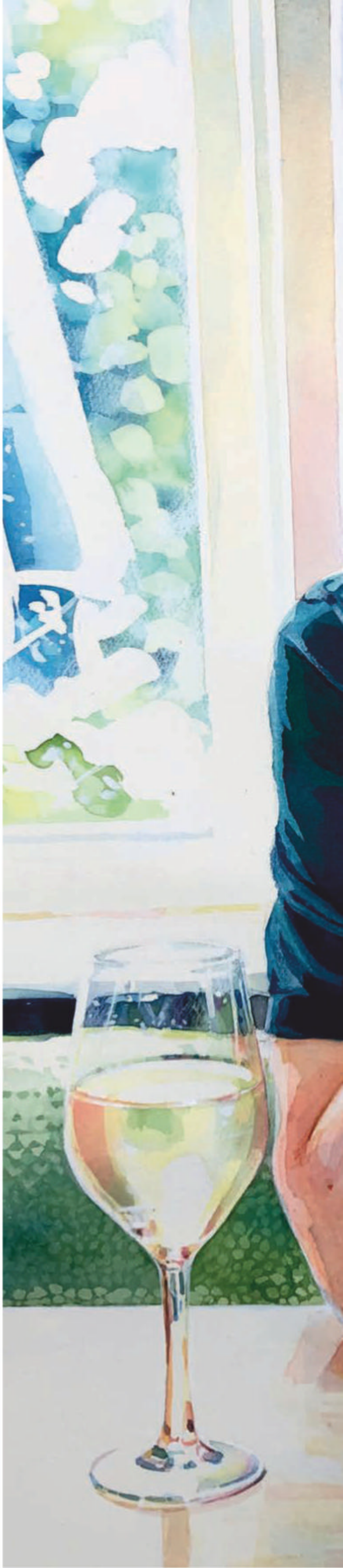
Looking for the light

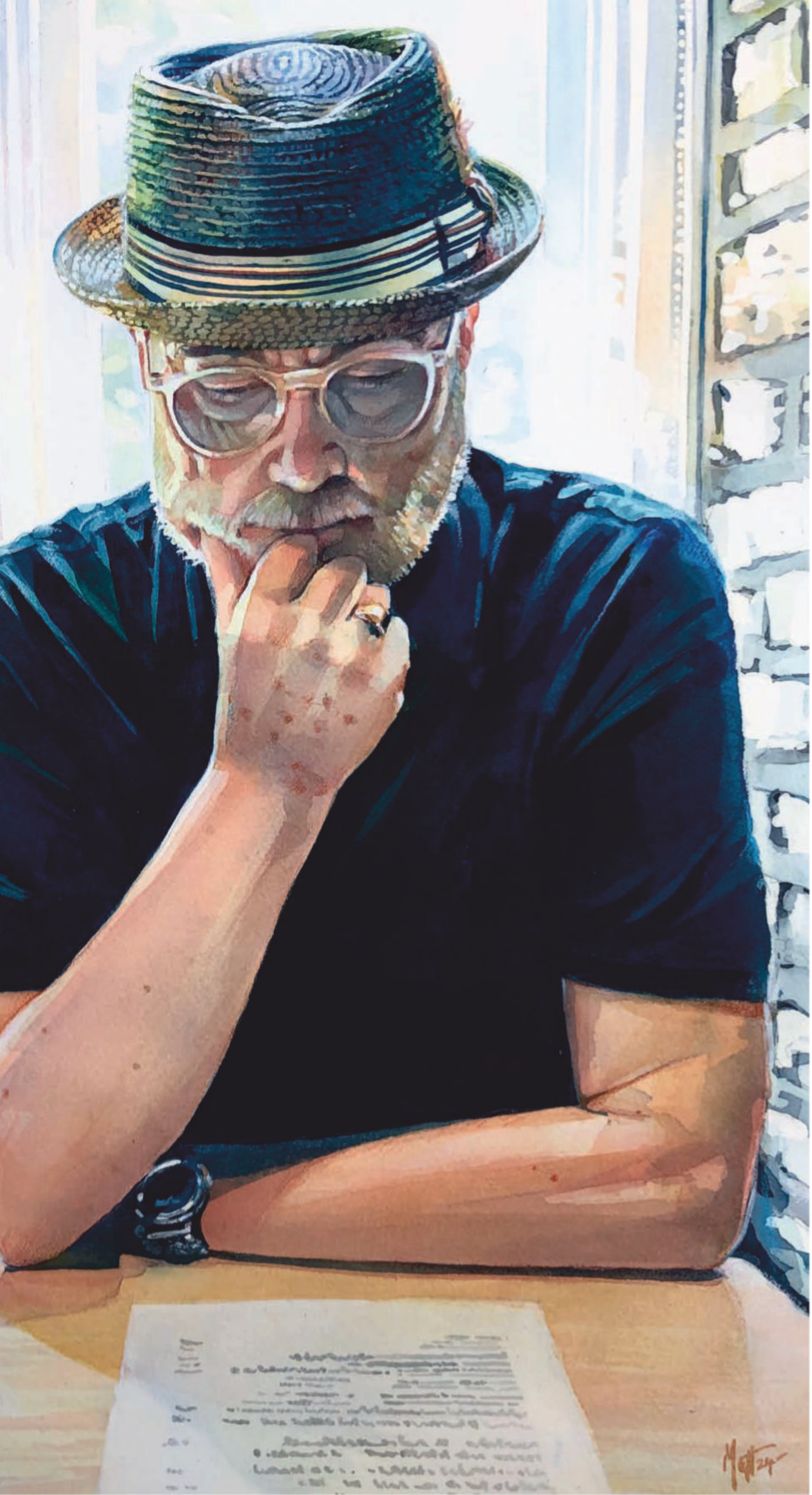
MATTHEW HAYDN JEANES shows you how to make the most from an everyday scene

SOMETIMES THE INSPIRATION FOR YOUR NEXT PAINTING can be right in front of you – literally. Trying to find the correct subject with great lighting and composition is quite an art: a lot of images won't work. But now and again something presents itself which can give you the idea for a great painting. Subjects that work well are quiet, relatable moments where your audience not only sees the image, but recognises 'the moment'. This happened to me with this painting. While out for a quiet lunch, my subject, Julian, was across the table from me, bathed in a beautiful back light, with a glass of wine while he contemplated the menu for his meal – a scene we have all seen a million times with different people. In these days of mobile phone cameras, that instant moment can be captured and the inspiration for a painting is born.
matthewjeanes.co.uk ▶



ORIGINAL IMAGE





MATTHEW'S MATERIALS

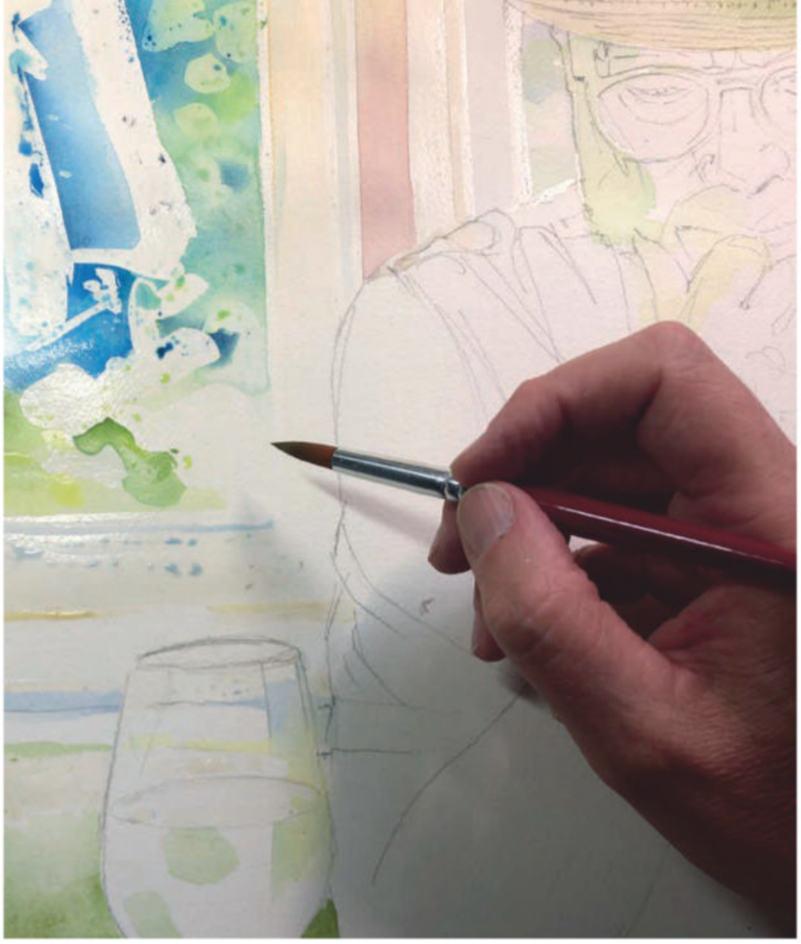
Pencils
A selection of artists' coloured pencils to suit your painting

Paints
Winsor & Newton Professional Watercolour Pans: Burnt Umber, Raw Sienna, Burnt Sienna, Raw Umber, Naples Yellow, Naples Yellow Deep, Yellow Ochre, Cerulean (Red shade), Alizarin Crimson, Scarlet Lake, Cadmium Red, Indian Red, Cerulean Blue, Antwerp Blue, Cobalt Blue (Red shade and Green shade), Manganese Blue, French Ultramarine, Winsor Green (Blue Shade) Winsor Violet, Payne's Grey, Potter's Pink, Neutral Tint, Rose Dore, Perylene Maroon, Indigo, Viridian, Davy's Grey, Mars Black, Ivory Black
Winsor & Newton Designers Gouache: Titanium White

Brushes
Pro-Arte Brushes Series 007, various sizes including 1,2, 3, 5, 10, 20 and a 1" Flat

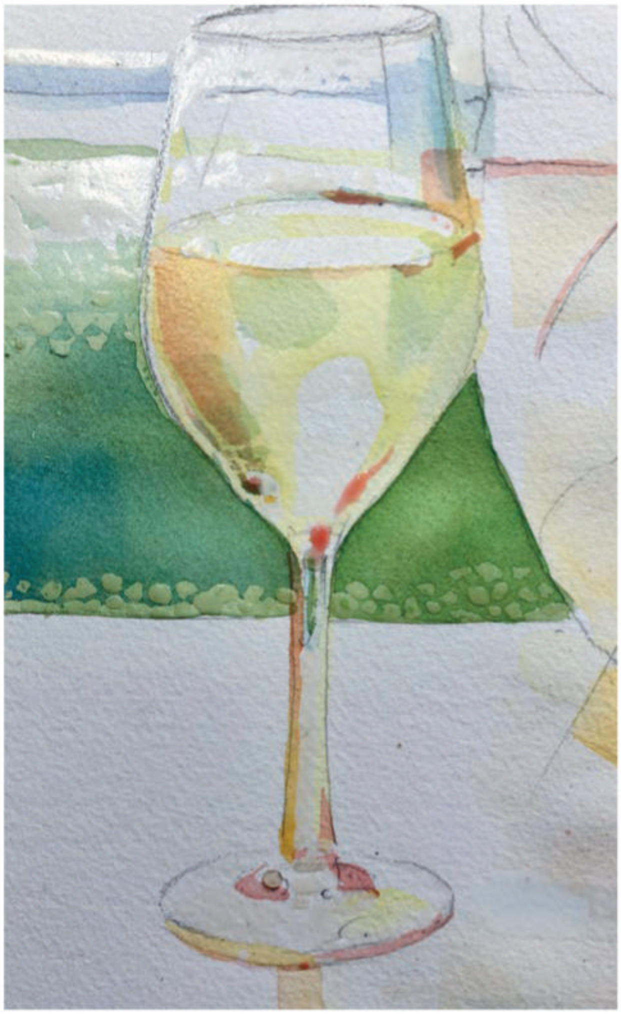
Support
Fabriano Artistico Artists' Watercolour Paper, Traditional White, 18x24" 140lb
Winsor & Newton Colourless Masking Fluid (not permanent)
Royal Sovereign Taper Point Colour Shaper No 2
Soft putty rubber
Ramekin/small dish
A3 heavy grade tracing paper
HB pencil

STEP-BY-STEP



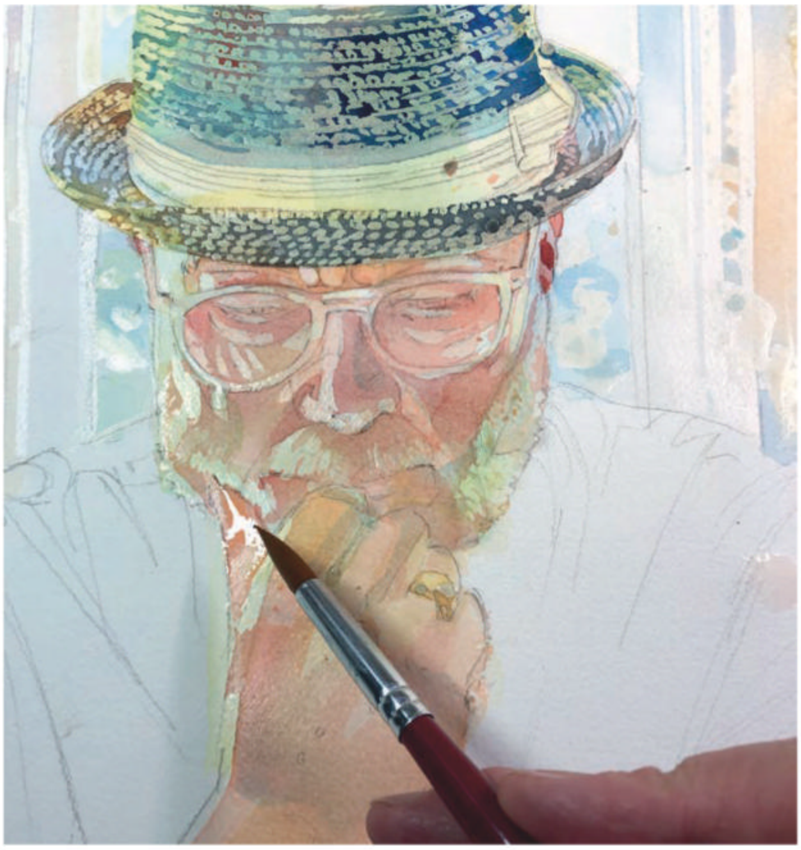
1 STARTING OUT

As I am painting a figure here but not a portrait, I sketch out my composition on cartridge paper first, which allows me to make mistakes and do all my planning. Then, using a lightbox, I minimally sketch out what I need onto my watercolour paper. I keep the facial details light to let my paint do the work. Once done, I use colourless masking fluid to add highlights on the window, the glass, the glasses and the back of my subject. As the light is flooding the scene from behind, I need to preserve that light with the white of the paper. I then add light washes of Viridian, French Ultramarine, Naples Yellow and Rose Dore to the background.



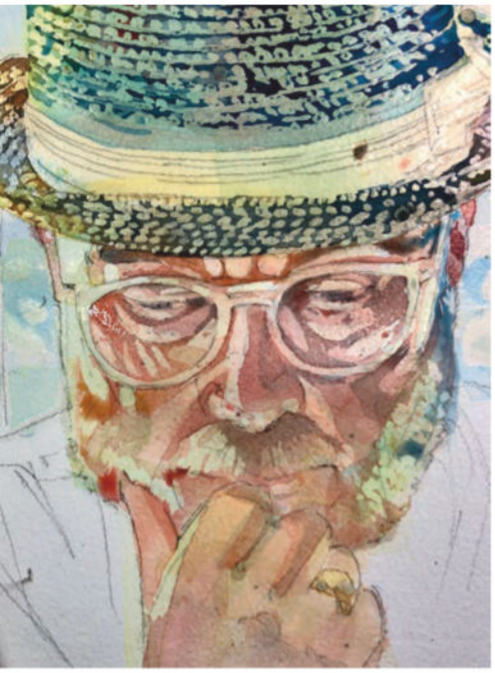
2 TACKLE THE GLASS

One of the elements of calm here is the beautiful glass of wine, With the light behind it, the glass elevates the reflection of the wine. Painting glass and reflections is about painting what is NOT there. I have already masked out tiny details to preserve the white of the highlights and reflections, now I have to look at the lightest colours and work wet on wet to bleed them together. Look hard into the image to find the subtleties of graduated colour. All the surroundings can be reflected back into the glass (the seat, the window, the arm) suspend what you know and go with what you can see.



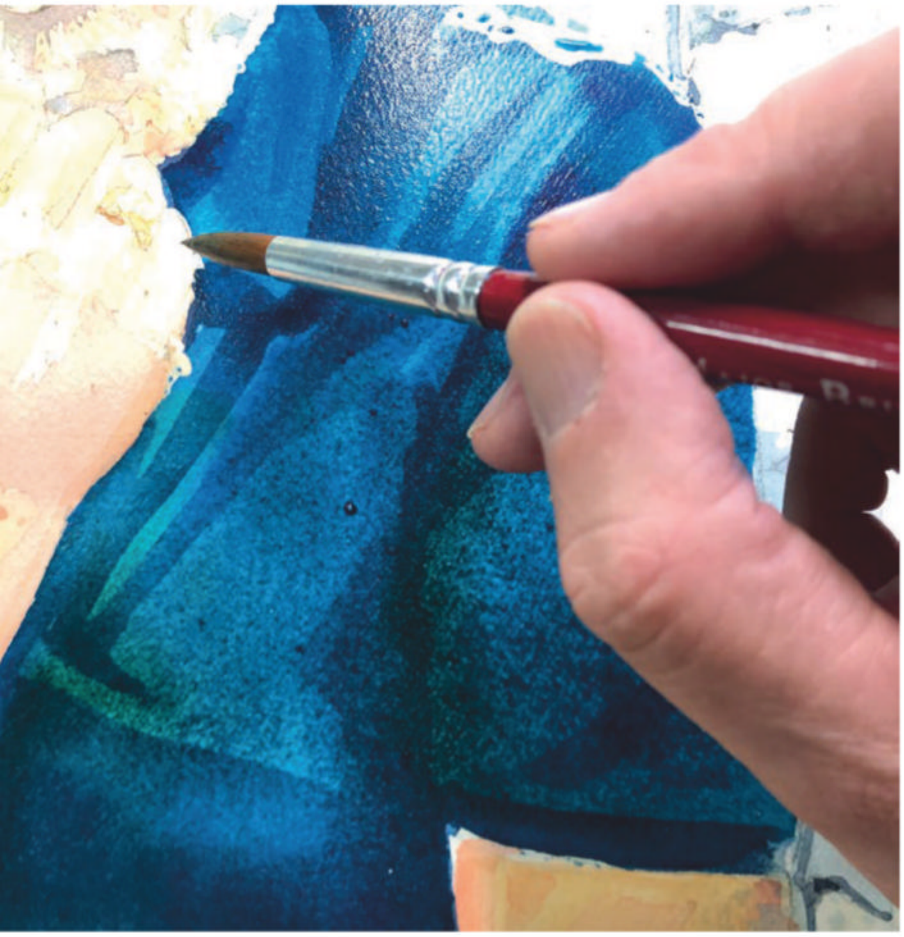
3 BUILD UP SKIN TONES

As I start to work on Julian, I add in light washes first. On the skin I use a light wash of Naples Yellow with a touch of Cadmium Red and Burnt Sienna. I want to build up the skin tones as glazes (transparent washes) rather than go in with a block, finished skin tone, because it's easier to build up and add various reflections of colour and have the option to dilute them or remove them with tissue, than to dive in too soon with a bolder colour that can't be changed. I also add a base of Green Gold, Naples Yellow Deep, Indigo and Winsor Blue to the hat. Once this is fully dry, I re-mask various areas like the skin highlights and hat texture.



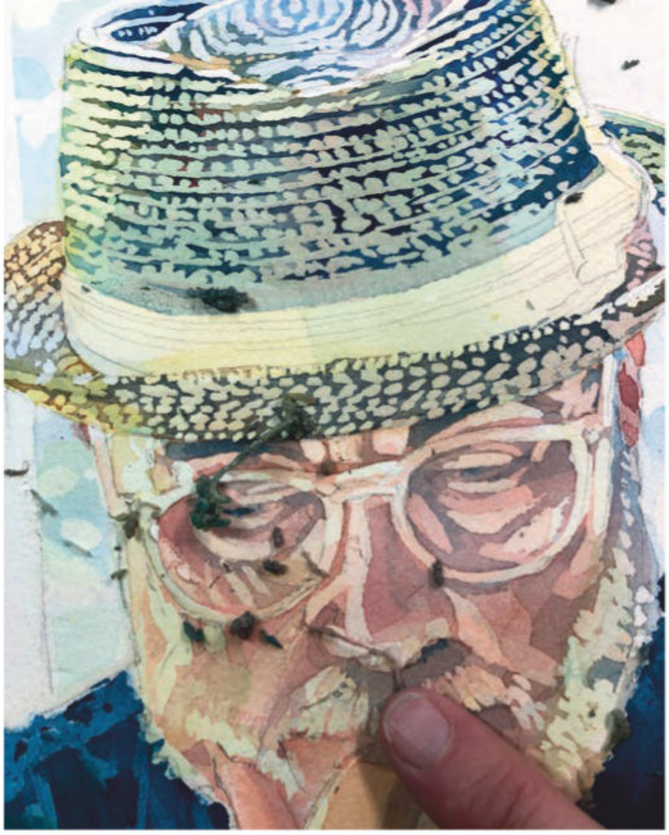
4 PAINT THE DETAIL ON THE FACE

This painting is about 'the moment' not the person – and remember there's a distinct difference between painting a 'moment' and a 'likeness.' With this in mind, I'm trying to see the detail on the face as shapes and colours, so am painting washes of colour and including sharp contrasts of Scarlet Lake, Cadmium Orange and Yellow Ochre when I see them. In effect, I'm working in reverse, going from light to dark, masking areas of the beard, glasses, skin and facial lines. I'm also trying not to paint in details like pupils and let the washes do the heavy lifting. I mask more texture into the hat and add more washes.



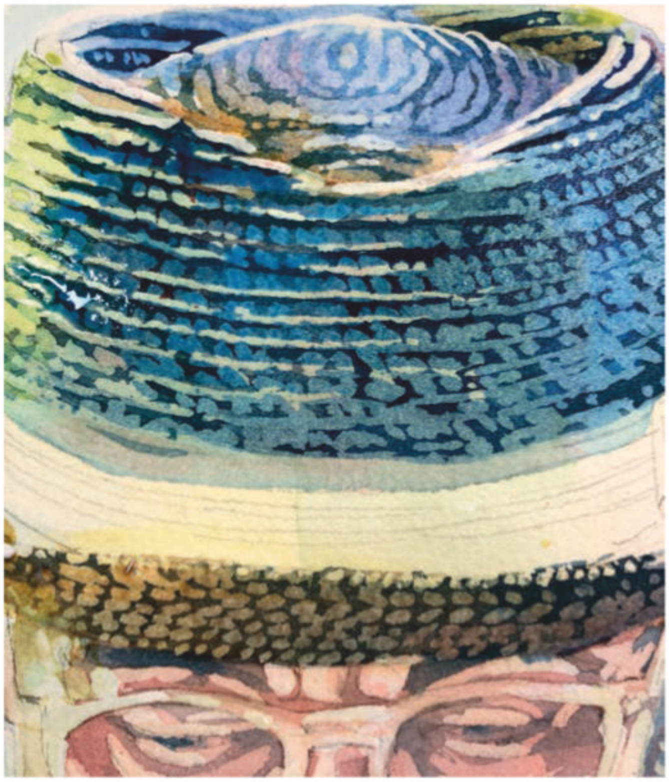
5 CONCENTRATE ON THE BACKGROUND

The window and wall are simple and I don't want to over complicate them with busy paintwork. I am also happy to see the watercolour lines and shapes. With the shirt, I add in the creases and darker areas first. Because this is a dark top, I need to put on a bold colour wash fairly quickly. In a ramekin, I mix French Ultramarine, Antwerp Blue and Indigo with a little water, then use a number 5 brush and paint a wash over the whole shirt. I then bleed in colours and dark tones and leave it to dry. If you build up dark colours too gradually, the paint can actually get lighter and go a little powdery.



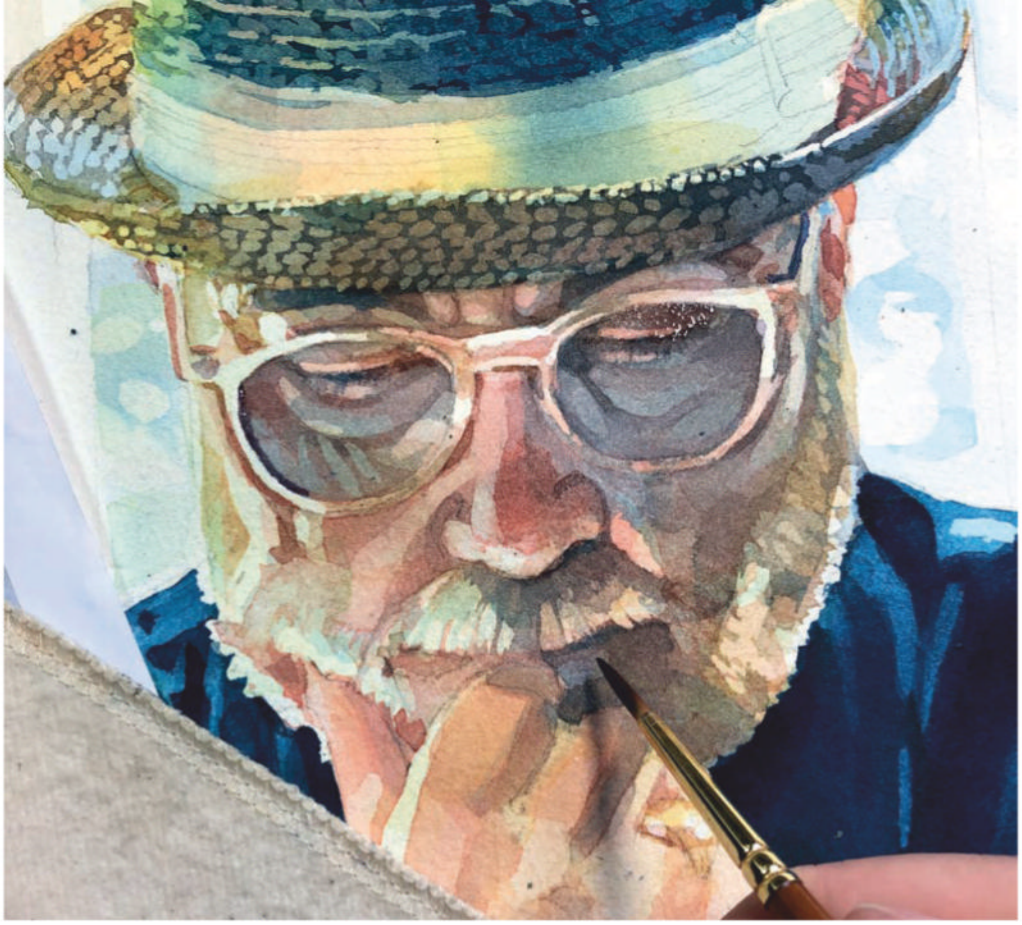
6 REMOVE THE MASKING FLUID

Use your finger to roll the dried rubber away. Doing this will reveal exactly where you are. Everything looks crude and harsh and it's easy to panic at this stage, but remember, you're only halfway through.



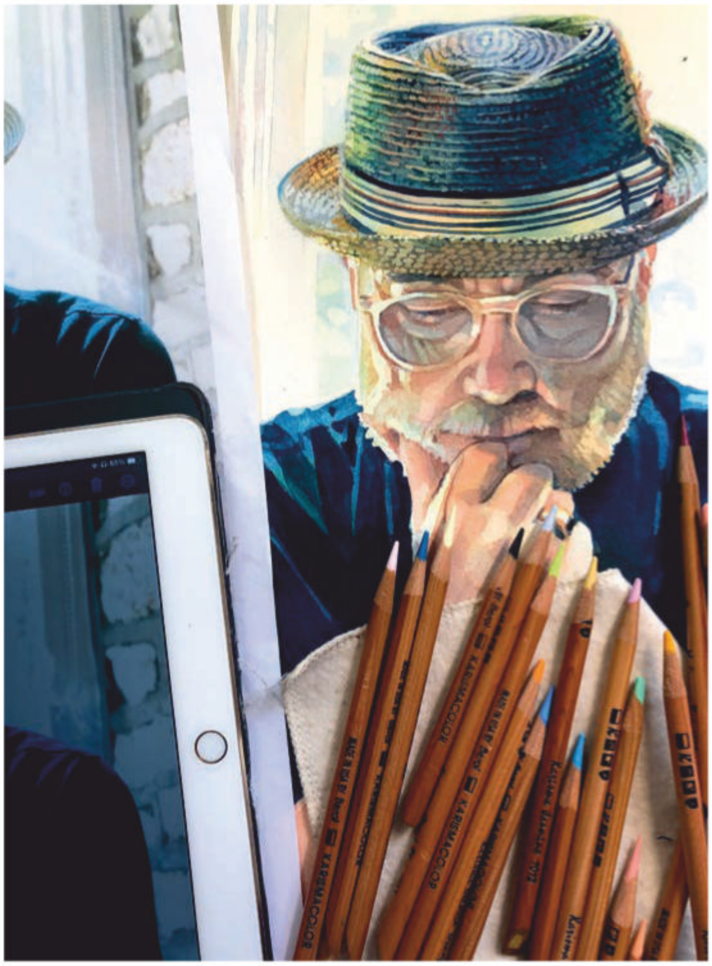
7 PUT THE HIGHLIGHTS BACK IN

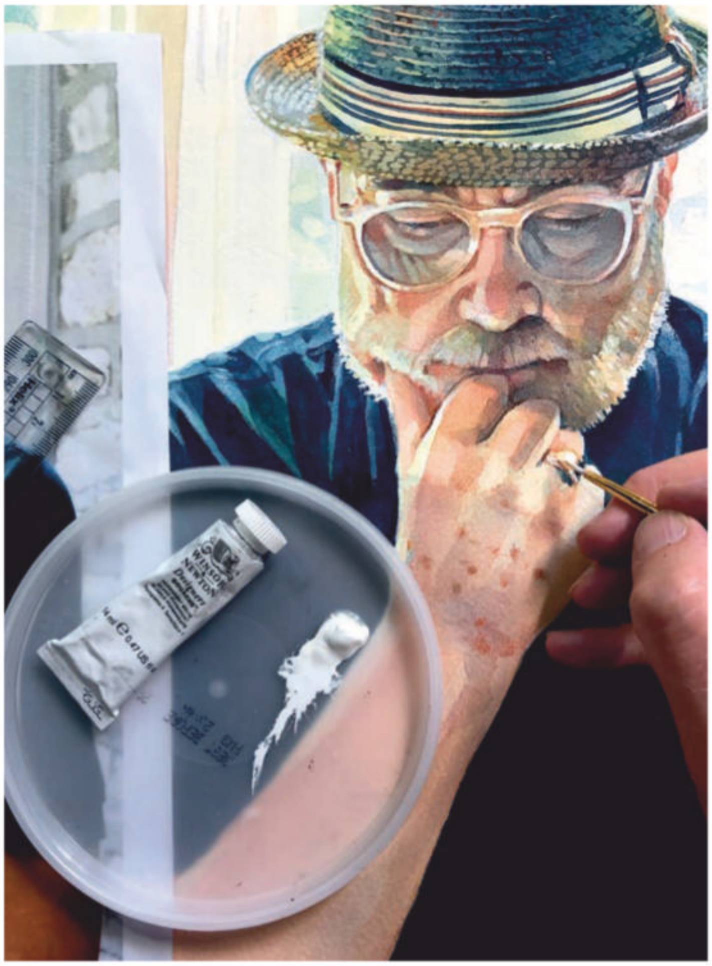
The highlights that were added at the start may have been removed so add them again. A subtle area of masking fluid may be required to protect other areas as I add in bigger and bolder washes. Blending and bleeding washes and colours together over the previously masked areas, will start to do away with those hard edges. I also look at the glass, table and menu, layering delicate washes of colour, all the while checking the subtle light reflections from the window and reflected colour in the shadows. I also paint in delicate washes to represent the wood grain. ▶



8 ADD DETAIL ON THE FIGURE

First, remove any further areas of masking fluid. As Julian is actually in shadow and the light is coming from behind him, any highlights are from the sides. Using a number 2 brush, start adding washes of colour, subtly blending areas together and adding contrast where needed. Neutral Tint and Payne's Grey are great for this. Try not to put in any painted detail and avoid small brushes. It takes some courage, but I add a full wash of French Ultramarine to the lenses of the glasses and the side of the face.





9 MOVE TO COLOURED PENCILS

Because this is an 'impression' and not overly detailed, I want the paint to have done the work, so I carefully add in a little coloured pencil. This is purely to pull out highlights and sharpen up any rough edges. I use a soft/waxy coloured pencil which won't scratch the surface. Use it sparingly: too much can undo all your lovely paintwork.

10 EMPHASISE SUNNY AREAS

Looking at the highlights, I add a touch of Titanium White Designer's Gouache to accentuate those bright sunny areas. Again, make sure you add this sparingly: it's easy to overpaint and add too many highlights. My painting is now complete and I leave it for a day or so, before returning to view it with fresh eyes to check everything is as it should be. ◻

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About the expert

Dr Lucy Worsley until recently was joint chief curator at Historic Royal Palaces and is the author of several books. She has presented TV shows for various channels.

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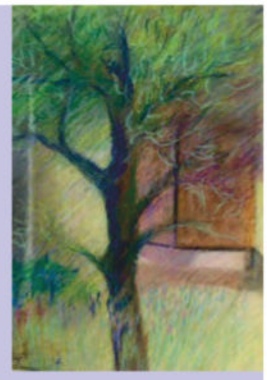

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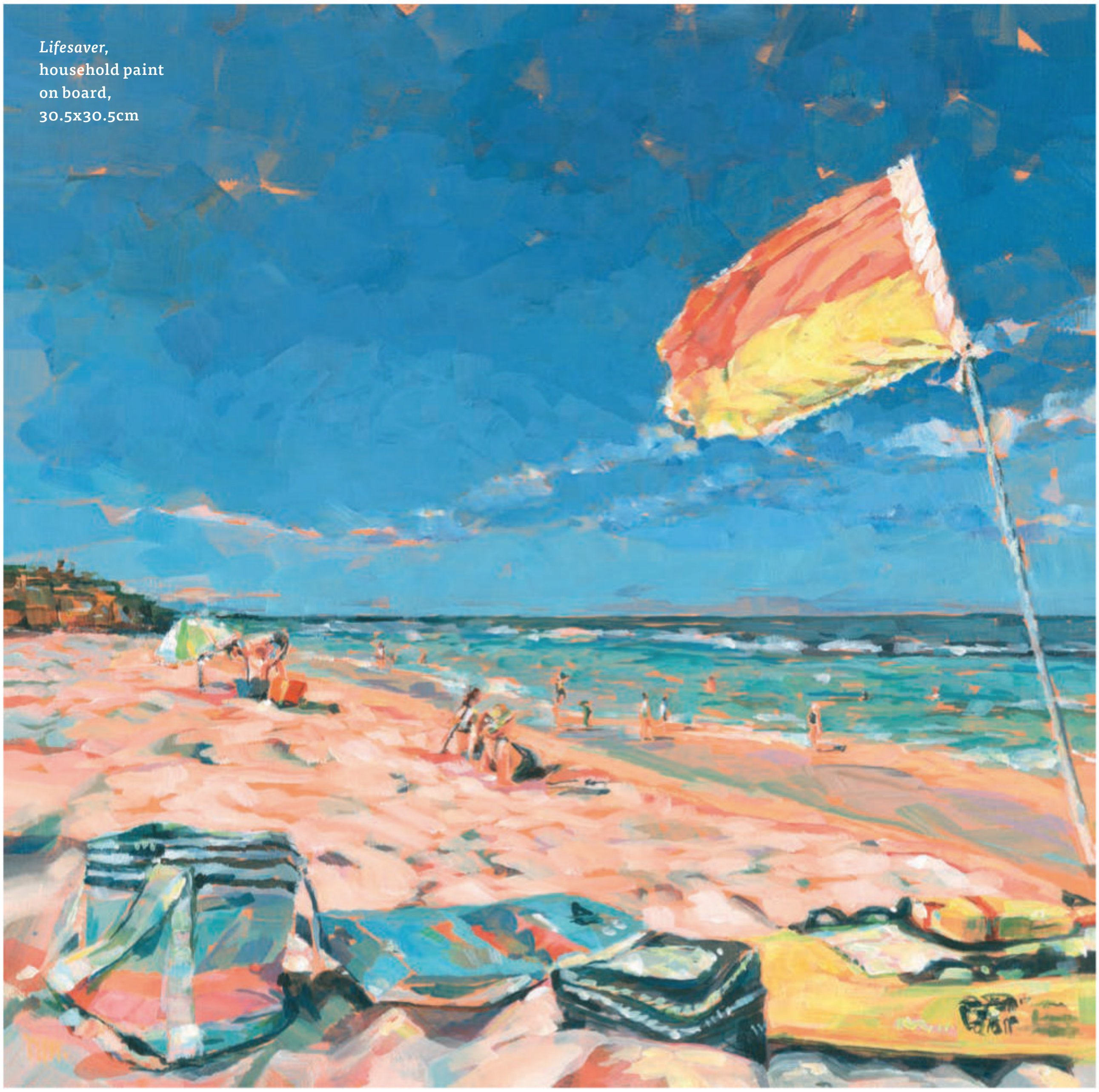

Lifesaver,
household paint
on board,
30.5x30.5cm

Picture this

Each month we feature a talented artist and ask them to choose one of their own paintings which reflects on their practice. In this issue, we speak to Australian painter **NATASHA MOTT**

As a glass half full kind of person, I naturally gravitate toward compositions filled with beauty and playful energy. My paintings reflect my long-standing love affair with the ocean. Growing up on a remote farm in outback Australia, our annual beach holiday was a cherished tradition – memories that now come to life again through my beachscape paintings.

I moved to the city to complete my Bachelor of Visual Arts and Graduate Diploma in Education, building a career that fosters creativity in young people. Teaching and volunteering in schools – painting sets and murals – led me to repurpose household acrylics onto wooden birch panels, shaping my sustainable practice today.

Beyond nostalgia, my work highlights the power of community and shared experience. *Lifesaver* plays on a globally recognised symbol of safety while reflecting the ocean's role as a place of renewal – a true lifesaver in both a literal and emotional sense. This piece celebrates that dual meaning, showing the patrolled beach as a physical safe haven and a place of restoration and joy.

By capturing moments in time, I invite viewers to reflect on their own treasured memories, forging connections through storytelling. Sustainability is central to my practice – not just through materials, but in themes of environmental awareness and participation.
natashamott.com.au □

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